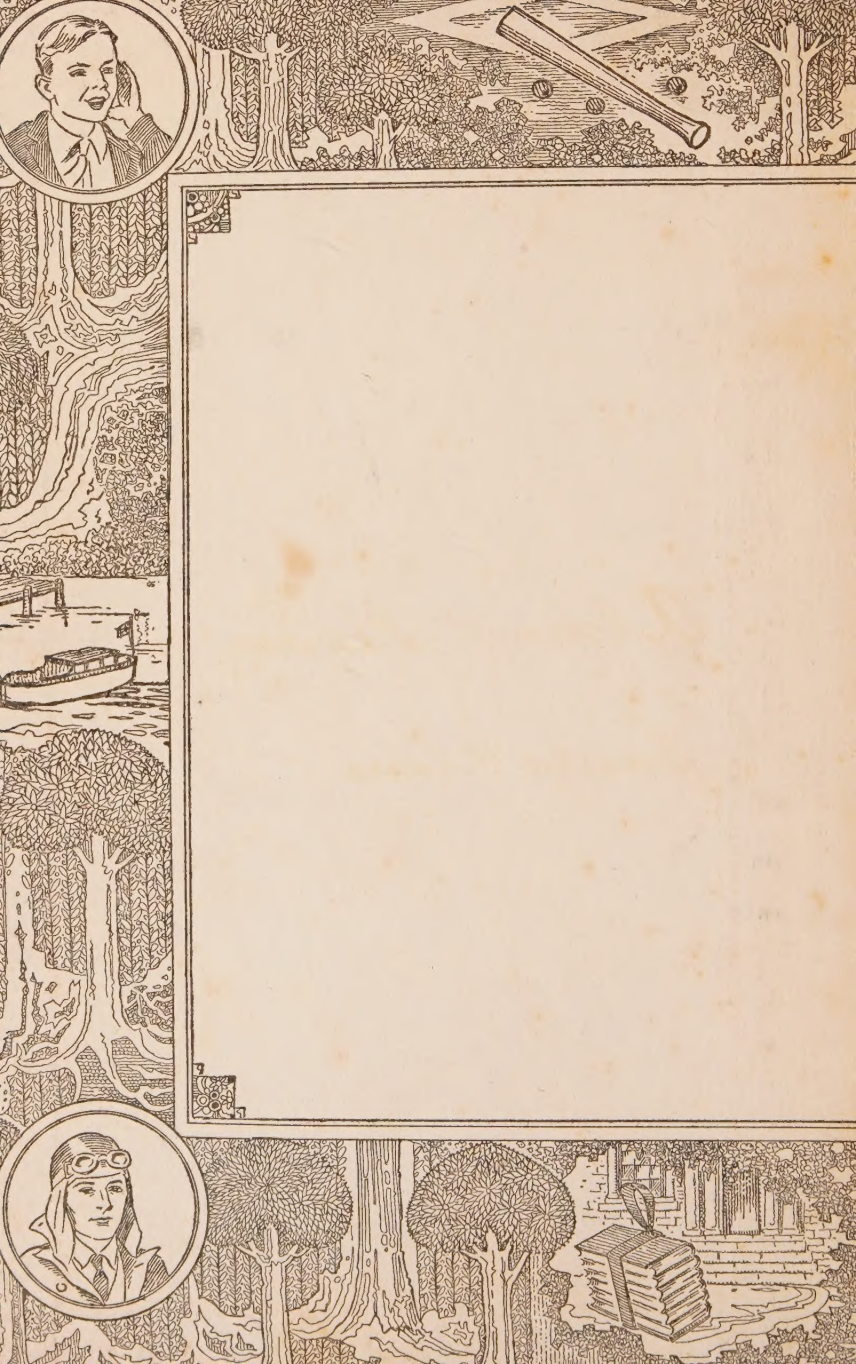
BUDDY at RAINBOW LAKE

HOWARD R. GARIS



This is my Book

Almont Pierce

Santa Claus

"HURRAY!" CRIED TOM IN DELIGHT. "WE'RE SAILING!"

"Buddy at Rainbow Lake." (See page 149)

Buddy at Rainbow Lake

or

A Boy and His Boat

BY

HOWARD R. GARIS

Author of "Buddy in School," "Buddy and His Winter Fun," "Buddy and His Chum," The "Curlytop" Books, The "Uncle Wiggily" Books, etc.

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY

THE BUDDY BOOKS

By HOWARD R. GARIS

12mo. Cloth. Illustrated.

BUDDY ON THE FARM
Or, A Boy and His Prize Pumpkin

BUDDY IN SCHOOL
Or, A Boy and His Dog

BUDDY AND HIS WINTER FUN
Or, A Boy In a Snow Camp

BUDDY AT RAINBOW LAKE
Or, A Boy and His Boat

BUDDY AND HIS CHUM
Or, A Boy's Queer Search

(Other volumes in preparation)

CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY, NEW YORK

Copyright, 1930, by
CUPPLES & LEON COMPANY

Buddy at Rainbow Lake

Printed in U. S. A.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I	Caught in a Trap	1
II	Sad News	14
III	A Big Surprise	26
IV	Buddy Goes to Camp	37
V	Noises in the Night	50
VI	The Drifting Boat	63
VII	Buddy's Tumble	74
VIII	Tom's Big Fish	83
IX	Buddy Finds a Cave	93
X	Sleeping Out	106
XI	In the Rain	119
XII	Pirate Island	127
XIII	Some Bad Luck	138
XIV	Two Sailor Boys	145
XV	The Corn Roast	158
XVI	Buddy is Gone	169
XVII	An Anxious Search	178
XVIII	Buddy's Queer Ride	184
XIX	The Indian Camp	192
XX	Camping Fun	200

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2022 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/buddyatrainbowla0000howa

BUDDY AT RAINBOW LAKE

CHAPTER I

CAUGHT IN A TRAP

"WHAT would you do if you caught a bear?" asked Tom Gordon.

"Well," answered Buddy Martyne, looking up from a pile of sticks and boxes over which he and his chum had been working, "if I caught the kind of a bear I saw up in the winter camp I wouldn't be afraid."

"Why not?" Tom wanted to know.

"Because he was a tame bear and could do tricks and he wouldn't hurt you or me or anybody," answered Buddy.

"Yes, but s'posing you caught a *wild* bear in the trap?" asked Tom, with a look over his shoulder as if, even then, bears might be about. "What would you do then?"

"A wild bear?" asked Buddy.

"Sure!"

"A real, wild bear?" Buddy was asking questions now so he would have a chance to think of an answer. "Do you mean a real, wild bear?"

"That's the kind I mean," answered Tom. "What if you caught that kind in your trap?"

"Well," said Buddy slowly, "you know a bear is pretty big, if he's wild or tame. The bear up where I was in the winter lumber camp was big and he was tame. But I'm not going to make a big trap—only a little one, and so a bear can't get caught in it."

"Oh," spoke Tom and he seemed a little disappointed. "Then you aren't going to make a big trap?"

"Only a little one, about this big," and Buddy pointed to a wooden box, one of several he had begged from Mr. Tort, the grocer, that day.

"What can you catch in a trap like that?" Tom inquired.

"A fox, maybe, or a wolf," Buddy answered. "Or a bob-cat."

"What's a bob-cat?" exclaimed Tom.

"It's a cat with a bobbed tail—you know, cut off short," explained Buddy as he began tying a string on a stick.

"Oh, that kind! Pooh! They're nothing!" said Tom and he didn't seem to think much of the trap Buddy was making. "Why, Mr. Cutter, the butcher, has a cat with a bobbed tail. It's easy to catch her in a trap. That wouldn't be any fun!"

"Mr. Cutter's cat is tame, even if she has a bobbed tail," said Buddy. "Maybe it got run over by an auto—her tail I mean—and was cut off that way. But the kind of a bob-cat I might catch is terrible wild, and they're as big as my dog Brick and they got sharp teeth and claws and they yowl like anything! And if you catch a real, live wild bob-cat in a trap you're catching something!"

"Yes, maybe you are," agreed Tom. "I didn't think you meant that kind of a bob-cat.

I didn't think it would be much fun to catch Mr. Cutter's tame cat."

"Of course not!" agreed Buddy. "And, anyhow, I'm not going to set my trap around here. I'm only making it here but I'm going to take it to camp with me where I'm going with my father and mother pretty soon, and I'll catch lots of wild animals then."

"Foxes?" asked Tom.

"Sure!"

"And wolves?"

"Maybe. I'm not sure about the wolves," went on Buddy.

"Wolves are terrible savage," said Tom, with another look over his shoulder. "They might break out of your trap even after they were caught in it and bite you."

"This trap is going to be good and strong," Buddy answered. "You wait and you'll see. It's almost ready to try."

"How you going to try it?" asked Tom.

"Oh, I'll set it up in our back yard and then you and I can hide in the bushes and wait, and

when anything comes close enough I'll pull the string and the box will fall down over whatever's in the trap and be caught."

"But s'posing it's something big, like a horse?" asked Tom. "Won't he kick your trap all to pieces?"

"Say!" cried Buddy with a laugh that made his blue eyes sparkle with laughter, "do you think I'm going to make a trap big enough to catch a horse? That's all the bigger my trap is going to be," and he pointed to the wooden box which was not quite as large as a kitchen chair.

"No, you couldn't get a horse under that box," agreed Tom. "But even if you caught Brick under it by pulling the string and letting it fall, he could stand up on his hind legs, push it over and get out."

"I'm not going to catch Brick in my trap," objected Buddy. "I wouldn't do that to my dog."

"Then what are you going to catch to try

your trap before you go to camp?" asked the other boy.

"I'll set the trap up in the back yard," explained Buddy as he propped the box up on the stick to which he had tied the string. "And then I'll wait until something goes in to get the bait. It don't have to be anything big. A chicken or a cat would do just to try the trap."

"Maybe Mr. Cutter's bob tailed cat will come over this way, like she sometimes does, and you'll catch her," suggested Tom.

"Maybe," Buddy agreed. "Anyhow whoever gets in my trap can't get out until I let 'em."

"Why not?"

"Because. Look here!" Buddy showed how the box, which would fall down when the stick was pulled away, would land on a sort of square platform of wood, which then became the bottom of the box. And as the box was fastened at the back with iron hinges to this bottom board, and as the front edge of the falling box snapped on a spring catch, such as you

see on a screen door, it could not be raised from inside once any animal was caught.

"So," went on Buddy, "whatever gets under my trap has got to stay in until I come, pull back the catch, raise the box and let it out."

"Unless maybe it's a big wolf and he breaks out," said Tom, laughing.

"Yes," admitted Buddy, ruffling up his dark, red hair, "he might do that. But I guess maybe I'll only catch a fox when I go to camp."

"I'm going to camp, too," said Tom as Buddy worked away at finishing his trap.

"Are you?" asked the other small boy.

"Sure! We're going to Rainbow Lake, but I don't believe there are any foxes there, or wolves or bob-cats."

"That's too bad," Buddy said. "But maybe there are. You can't be sure. Why don't you make a trap, anyhow?"

"I guess I will after I see how yours works. When you going to try it?"

"Pretty soon now."

"What you going to put in for bait?" Tom wanted to know.

Buddy looked around the back yard of his home where he and his chum had been playing, but where, now, the trap was being built. There were a few bushes in the yard and an old apple tree that had a little fruit on.

"I guess I'll bait my trap with an apple," said Buddy.

"Does a fox or a wolf eat an apple?" Tom wanted to know.

"I don't guess they do," admitted Buddy. "But bears eat apples."

"I thought you said you weren't going to catch a bear," and Tom laughed a little.

"That's right—I did," agreed the blue-eyed boy, once more ruffling his red hair with his hands which were getting a bit dirty. "But a chicken will eat apples and I can try my trap with a chicken just as well as I can with a fox or wolf."

"You haven't got any chickens," objected Tom.

"Well, Mr. Parson has in the yard back of us," stated Buddy. "I can take a board off our back fence and some of Mr. Parson's chickens will come in our yard and they'll see the apple I'm going to put in my trap and when a chicken, or maybe a rooster, goes under the box I'll pull the string, the stick will come out, the box will come down and I'll catch something."

"That'll be fun!" agreed Tom. "I'll help you."

The two boys, who lived a few houses apart, and who had been chums and playmates ever since they started to school together in the primary classes, worked hard to finish the trap. They talked about it as they worked speaking of the fun they expected to have in camp. Buddy had heard his father and mother say, a few days before, that they were going to spend the summer vacation in a camp near a lake in the woods.

As it happened Tom Gordon's father and mother also had a cottage at a camp on Rainbow Lake which was some miles from Mountchester, where Buddy had his home. Tom had been going to this camp with his folks, including his sister Lucy, for several seasons. But this was the first time Buddy had ever had the chance to live out in the woods in a tent and he was delighted at the pleasure ahead of him.

"It will be lots more fun than I had while I was in the winter camp of the lumbermen at Grandpa's," he said to his mother.

"I hope so," she answered.

So, as soon as Buddy learned he was to go camping that summer he began planning things to do. One was to make a trap to catch wild animals and this, fashioned from a box, some boards and sticks, was now nearly finished. In a little while, with the help of Tom, Buddy had the trap ready to try.

"We'll set it up in the back yard," Buddy said.

"Better put a long string on the stick so we

can hide away off in the bushes and pull it," suggested Tom.

"I will," agreed Buddy. " 'cause we wouldn't want any wild animal to see us hiding and waiting to catch him."

"Or a chicken, either," added Tom.

"Yes, or a chicken, either," said Buddy. "Now I'll get an apple and we'll bait the trap and then we'll hide and pull the string."

The box with its wooden bottom and spring catch was propped up with a stick. To the stick prop the long string was fastened and then, being careful not to pull it too soon, Buddy and Tom took the other end of the string with them to their hiding place in the bushes farther down the yard. They could only see the box trap by peering up over the top of the bushes. The apple bait was put in place.

"Now I'll take a board off our back fence," whispered Buddy when he and his chum were ready. " 'Cause if a stray cat or something

else doesn't go in my trap to try it, a chicken will be all right."

"Chickens like apples," suggested Tom as Buddy went to loosen the fence board which was easy to do as he often pulled it off to crawl through himself in taking a short cut across the yard back of his home.

For some time Buddy and Tom crouched back of the screen of bushes and waited. Now and then they looked to where there was a hole in the fence, but no chickens seemed to be coming through. Perhaps it was too hot a day, for it was now the beginning of the summer vacation.

All of a sudden, however, Tom looked up over the top of the bush and whispered:

"There's something going in the trap!"

"Is there!" exclaimed Buddy, also looking up. "What is it?"

" 'Tisn't a chicken," went on Tom. "I guess it's a cat 'cause it's sorter gray. See it!"

The bushes were in the way of Buddy getting a good view, and he did not want to poke

his head up too high or come out, for fear of scaring whatever was going in the box trap. And something was going in.

"I guess it's a stray dog," whispered Buddy. " 'Tisn't Brick, for he's asleep in the garage. Oh, now it's all inside!"

"Sure! Pull the string—quick!" whispered Tom.

Buddy had a dim view of something entering his trap to get the apple bait. He pulled the string, out came the stick, the box dropped down and was fastened in place. And then, suddenly, came cries and shouts from the trap.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" yelled a shrill voice. "I want to get out! I'm caught! Let me out!"

Buddy and Tom looked at each other in great surprise.

What had they caught in the trap?

CHAPTER II

SAD NEWS

"WE'VE caught something!" gasped Buddy as he jumped out of the bushes, still holding in one hand the end of the string he had pulled to yank the stick away and let the box fall.

"Sure we caught something!" exclaimed Tom.

"But what can it be?" went on Buddy as shouts and yells kept coming from beneath the box which was held in place by the spring catch. " 'Tisn't a fox or a wolf; is it?"

"Course not!" cried Buddy beginning to run toward his trap. "None of them."

"Nor a cat, nor a dog nor even a bob-cat," went on Tom. "They couldn't talk like that."

Meanwhile from beneath the box came a voice crying:

"Let me out! Let me out!"

"It's some little boy or girl," decided Buddy.

"That's what it is!" agreed Tom. "Oh, but I wonder who?"

He was now running beside Buddy, the two boys eager and anxious to see who had been caught in the trap. And as they raced along Buddy's feet became entangled in the long cord.

"Oh!" he suddenly cried as he fell.

"Look out!" yelled Tom.

But it was too late. Tom stumbled over Buddy and there they both lay in a heap, half hidden in a clump of weeds in the yard, not far from the box trap under which was caught some one who was begging to be let out.

Now before I tell you who was in the trap I want to let those of you who are meeting Buddy for the first time, know something about him. Those of you who have read the other books in this series feel, I am sure, that you already know Buddy quite well.

As I told you in the first book, called "Buddy on the Farm, or a Boy and His Prize Pumpkin," our small hero lived with his father and mother in the town of Mountchester. Buddy had red hair and blue eyes and was a very lively little lad. He had many adventures among them being one about the pumpkin by which he was able to get money for his roller skates. His name was Dick but he was almost always called "Buddy."

In the second book, "Buddy in School," I told you how our little lad got his wonderful dog Brick, taking him away from a Gypsy who had no right to him. Then in the third book, "Buddy and His Winter Fun," I wrote a story about the blue-eyed lad going to his grandfather's farmhouse in the winter, and how he had a strange adventure with a bear in a lumber camp. Now it was summer, school had ended and Buddy was planning to go to a different kind of a camp.

A camp always made Buddy think of fishing, boats and wild animals, so it was not

strange that as soon as he heard he was to go to the woods he set about making a trap, with the help of his best chum Tom Gordon.

The trap had been set and now something or, rather, somebody, was caught in it and in their eagerness to see what it was the two boys had tripped and fallen.

"Did you hurt yourself, Tom?" asked Buddy as he untangled his feet from the string and got up.

"Not much. Did you?"

"No, I just bumped my elbows a little and scratched my hands. It's a good thing we fell into the thick weeds."

"It sure is!" agreed Tom.

He picked himself up and ran on with Buddy toward the box. From beneath it those cries and yells kept coming.

"Let me out! I want to get out! I don't like it in here!"

Hearing the voice more plainly now, Tom's face had a queer look. So did Buddy's and then Tom said:

"Why—why—it sounds like my little brother Ned!"

"So it does!" agreed Buddy. "How'd he get in my trap?"

"I guess it must have been him I saw crawling in when we were hiding behind the bushes," exclaimed Tom. "I thought it was a dog or a cat. Ned creeps around about as much as he walks. He was creeping into the trap, I guess, and that's why I thought he was a dog—or a cat."

"Are you sure it's your little brother in there?" asked Buddy.

"Sure. I know his voice. Listen!"

Again came the yells:

"Let me out! I want to come out!"

"It does sound like Ned," agreed the red-haired lad.

"I'll soon find out," said Tom. Then he called, loudly: "Are you in there, Neddie?"

"Yes, I'm in here!" was the answer, which seemed, however, rather mumbled. "But I want to come out!"

" 'Tis him!" exclaimed Buddy.

"Sure!" said Tom. "We got to let him out."

The hinged box was caught to the bottom board of the trap by a spring catch which could only be opened from the outside. It was like the catch on a cupboard door, as I told you.

Buddy soon slipped the catch back, he and Tom raised the box on its back hinges and there, sitting on what was the floor of the trap, they saw little Ned Gordon, red in the face from crying, and with streaks of dirt where he had wiped away his tears with soiled hands. But he was now rather more quiet and was eating the apple bait.

"Why, Neddie!" cried Tom. "How'd you get in the trap?"

"Is this a trap?" little Ned wanted to know.

"Sure it's a trap!" exclaimed Buddy

"I thought it was a apple box," went on the little fellow, chewing away at the fruit he had found. "That's why I crawled in."

"It's a good thing you didn't get pinched when the box fell down and caught you," Tom said.

"That's right," agreed Buddy. "I'd be sorry if Neddie was hurt. But it shows my trap works all right; doesn't it, Tom?"

"Sure it does."

"If I could catch your little brother I could catch a fox or a wolf."

"Sure! Golly! I wish I had a trap like this to take to our camp. Though I guess there aren't many wild animals at Rainbow Lake," said Tom.

"You never can tell," spoke Buddy as if he knew all about it. "But I'll help you make a trap like mine."

"Will you?" cried Tom. "That will be fine! You better come on out now, Neddie," he added.

"Wait 'till I eat this apple," said the little fellow. "I don't be afraid now when the top is up," he said, looking at the box which was raised and tilted away from him.

"He's eating all the bait," said Tom in a low voice, pointing to the apple of which not much more was now left than the core.

"Oh, well, that's all right," spoke Buddy. "I can get another apple. I'll set the trap again."

"Will you?" exclaimed Tom. "Well, then I'll take my little brother home so he won't get in it again. He runs away a lot. Once he climbed in an empty ash can and my mother couldn't find him for ever so long."

"I remember about that!" chuckled Buddy. "Well, if you'll take him home I'll set the trap again and maybe we can catch something real this time. I mean some animal."

Ned didn't want to go home, for he liked being with his brother and Buddy. But by the promise of another apple, which Buddy picked off the tree at the end of his yard, the little fellow was at last coaxed to his house where his mother was just beginning to get anxious and about to send his sister Lucy in search of him.

"Where was he, Tom?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"He was caught in a trap."

"In a trap! Oh, my goodness!"

"But it was only Buddy's box trap he's going to take to camp with him to catch foxes and wolves and it didn't hurt Neddie. He was just eating the apple bait," Tom explained.

"I got 'nother apple, too," spoke the little fellow, showing it.

"Well, you stay around here now," his mother told him. "It isn't safe for you to play at being a wild animal caught in a trap."

"It was fun!" said Ned, smiling now that he was no longer in the box.

"Please keep him here, Ma," begged Tom. "Buddy and I don't want the trap spoiled again by catching him."

"Yes, I'll keep him here with Lucy, Tom. Run along."

"And don't you come over in Buddy's yard, either, Lucy," her brother warned her. "You might get caught in the trap."

"Pooh! You'll never catch anything in that trap!" laughed Lucy.

"Just you wait and you'll see!" declared Tom as he hurried back to join his chum.

By this time Buddy had the box once more propped up on the holding stick, with the long string led into the bushes where he and Tom had hidden before. The apple was again in place, cut into three or four pieces.

" 'Cause I think now maybe some chickens or a rooster will go in to get the bait," said Buddy. "They like apples and three or four pieces look a lot more than one piece. Sit down now and keep quiet."

For some time the boys sat patiently in the bushes, Buddy holding the end of the string in his hand, ready to pull it as soon as he saw anything going in his trap. After a while a rooster and a few hens wandered into the Martyne yard through the hole in the back fence. Buddy and Tom watched anxiously as the fowls moved nearer and nearer to the baited trap. At last the old rooster saw the pieces of

apple. He blinked his eyes, cocked his head first to one side and then to the other, made some funny noises in his throat and then went slowly into the box trap.

"Pull the string!" whispered Tom, eagerly.

Buddy pulled. Down fell the box with a clatter and bang and such a cackling and crowing you never heard in all your life! For the rooster wasn't quite all the way inside the box when it fell as the stick was pulled out, and the edge caught him on the tail. It didn't hurt it much but it frightened him.

And because of the rooster's tail feathers, which were very thick, the box couldn't go all the way down and catch fast, and this left a big crack out of which the surprised rooster managed to scramble. So he wasn't caught after all.

"He got away!" said Buddy, regretfully.

"Too bad!" sighed Tom.

"I pulled the string too soon," went on the blue-eyed boy. "Next time I'll put the bait away far to the back so they'll have to go all

the way in to get it. Then I'll catch 'em! But my trap works all right; doesn't it?"

"It sure does!" agreed Tom. "I wish I had one like it!"

"I'll help you make one," offered Buddy. "We'll go over in your yard and make it now. Mine's all done."

As Buddy was hurrying over to his chum's house, having put away his own finished trap, Mrs. Martyne came along the street. She had been down town shopping.

"Where are you going, Buddy?" she asked.

"Over to Tom's house to help him make a trap like mine that I'm going to take camping with me."

"Wait a minute, Buddy," said Mrs. Martyne and the little boy was surprised to see such a serious look on his mother's face. "I'm afraid, my dear, I have sad news for you."

"Sad—sad news!" murmured Buddy. "What about? Is it about Brick, my dog?"

"No. It's about camp. I'm afraid, Buddy, that, after all, you can't go camping this summer!"

CHAPTER III

A BIG SURPRISE

BUDDY, for a few seconds, thought perhaps his mother was teasing him as she sometimes did in fun. But when he looked at her face, and saw how serious and sad it was, he knew she had meant what she said.

"Why can't I go to camp?" asked Buddy, while his chum Tom wondered what was going to happen.

"Because I must take a long trip in a train to go see Aunt Grace who is very ill. Your father is going with me and of course we shall have to take you, as we couldn't leave you up here alone. So that's why you can't go camping this summer, Buddy. I'm very sorry."

"So am I," said the blue-eyed boy, seriously. "Is Aunt Grace very sick?" he asked.

"Yes, very," replied his mother. "I got

word in a telegram a little while ago and I hurried down to daddy's office to ask about trains and see when he could go with us."

"Do I have to go?" Buddy inquired.

"Why, yes," Mrs. Martyne answered. "You love Aunt Grace; don't you? And you would want to see her, and you would want me to go help nurse her when she is ill; wouldn't you?"

"Oh, yes—of course," Buddy answered, but he didn't glance at his mother. He was looking at a clump of weeds and thinking how he and Tom had hidden in a clump like that to watch for something to go in the trap. Now, if he couldn't go to camp, there wasn't much use in having the trap.

"But couldn't you and daddy go down South where Aunt Grace lives and take care of her and leave me up here to go camping?" asked Buddy, slowly. "I love Aunt Grace and I'd like to see her. But you can tell her I had to go camping and that I'll come down when I finish. I want to catch some animals in my trap. Maybe," said Buddy, eagerly, "I could

catch a fox or a wolf for Aunt Grace and she could have it for a pet and that would make her get well."

"Oh, Buddy!" exclaimed his mother. "Aunt Grace is too ill to want any animal pets."

"They'd be alive; wouldn't they, Tom?" Buddy went on eagerly, appealing to his chum.

"Sure!" said Tom. He was feeling sad on Buddy's account and hoping some way might be found so he could go to camp as Tom was going.

" 'Cause," went on Buddy, "my box trap catches animals alive and doesn't hurt 'em at all; does it Tom?"

"Nope, Buddy!"

"And we caught the old rooster when he came through a hole in our fence," said Buddy excitedly, "and we caught Tom's little brother Ned."

"You did!" cried Mrs. Martyne in surprise. "Oh, that was too bad!"

"He went in to get the apple bait," Buddy explained.

"But he didn't get hurt, not a little bit," Tom quickly said for he didn't want Buddy's mother to worry. "Ned's all right—he liked it."

"Oh, Buddy, you should be more careful," said Mrs. Martyne.

"I was careful," answered the little boy. "But Ned crawled in on his hands and knees and Tom and I couldn't tell if he was a dog or a cat and we were just trying the trap and it worked fine and caught Ned. But he only hollered a little and went on eating the apple."

"Well, I'm glad he wasn't hurt," said Mrs. Martyne. "But you had better come in the house now, Buddy, and get ready to go on the train with your father and me. We shall have to take a sleeper and travel all night to get to where Aunt Grace lives by morning. Tom will excuse you; won't you, Tom?"

"Oh, yes'm, Mrs. Martyne."

"But I got to help Tom make a trap like

mine so he'll have one when he goes to camp!" exclaimed Buddy. "Oh, dear! It's too bad!"

Buddy wouldn't have cried for anything, though if ever he felt like it this was the time. To think, after all his planning about going to camp and living in a tent, he now found he couldn't! It was just terrible, he thought. Yet he was very fond of Aunt Grace, who was his mother's sister.

And at any other time Buddy would have been wild with delight at the idea of getting in a wonderful sleeping car and traveling all night to that big city down South where he had been once before and where he had seen many new and strange sights.

But now—with the new idea of a camp in the woods—Buddy had no pleasure in the thought of a railroad journey. He and his father had planned to do some wonderful things in camp.

"Do I—do I—now—*have* to go with you and daddy to see Aunt Grace?" asked Buddy, softly.

"Why, of course, my dear. Don't you want to see her when she is ill? She is very fond of you."

"Oh, yes, of course, Mother. But you could tell Aunt Grace I love her—or I could write her a letter and tell her—and I could go to camp by myself!" he quickly said. "I wouldn't be afraid to stay in a tent alone in the woods. I could take my trap with me and my pop gun. Of course you can't shoot any wild animals with a pop gun, but it makes a big noise and would scare 'em away. Please, Mother, you and daddy go to see Aunt Grace and let me go camping!"

"Oh, no, Buddy dear, it isn't to be thought of! Say good-bye to Tom, and come back to the house with me."

Buddy was a pretty good little boy. He didn't stamp his feet or shuffle his shoes, and he didn't say anything. He just turned his head aside from looking at his chum and his mother and started slowly back toward his house. Then he paused and called:

"Tom!"

"Yes, Buddy."

"You—you can have that—that trap I made. I won't want it now. You won't have to make any trap of your own—you can have —mine."

"Oh, thanks, Buddy. But I don't want to take your trap."

"Yes, Tom, go on, take it! I can't use it if I'm not going to camp. It's all—all right! You—you take it!"

Buddy started to run then. He felt he had to, and his mother said nothing for she knew just how he felt. And when Tom had walked on to his house, not going back to get Buddy's trap just then, and when Mrs. Martyne reached home, she did not at once look for Buddy. She knew, though, where he was. Up in his room. And he was feeling sad, she knew. For it was a great disappointment not to go to camp when he had counted so much on it.

"But I must take him with me," thought Mrs. Martyne. "I couldn't let him go to camp

alone, certainly not. And there is no one with whom I could leave him. Poor, sad little boy!"

After a while Buddy came down from his room, and, going up to his mother said, in a low voice:

"Shall I begin to pack up my things now? I mean to get ready to go on the train with you and daddy to see Aunt Grace?"

"Yes, I suppose you might as well," Mrs. Martyne answered. "I am so sorry to disappoint you, Buddy, but it can't be helped. Aunt Grace is very ill and needs me. I could hardly go so far alone. But perhaps, after we have been down there a while, I can stay with her and you and daddy can come back and go camping. I'm not sure, but maybe."

"Maybe," agreed Buddy, but his voice did not have much happiness in it. He felt that the best part of the summer would be gone then. And he had, so much, wanted to go camping!

However, he was a brave little chap, so he made the best of it and began to lay out, in

his room, the things he wanted to take with him. He heard a scratching and whining at his door and, opening it, let in his dog.

"Oh, Brick!" cried Buddy, throwing his arms around his pet. "What about you? I didn't think about you. I could take you to camp with me, but I guess I can't take you on the sleeping car down South. Oh, Brick, I hate to leave you!"

Brick whined in sympathy for he knew something was wrong and for a time he and Buddy sat close together on the floor in the boy's room. Up in her room, Mrs. Martyne was hastily packing some of her own and her husband's things to get ready for the journey.

When Tom Gordon reached his house his mother saw at once that something was the matter. Ned had come home a little while before, laughing over having been caught in the trap. Nothing serious had happened, Mrs. Gordon knew that, but still something bothered Tom.

"What is it, son?" his mother asked him.

"Buddy can't go camping," he said.

"Why not?"

"He's got to go with his father and mother away off down South where his Aunt Grace is sick."

"That's too bad."

"It sure is!" sighed Tom. He felt almost as badly about Buddy as he would have felt if he had been stopped from a camping trip. And then, all of a sudden, Tom had a great idea.

"Mother!" he cried. "Mother!" His eyes were dancing with delight.

"Yes, Tom, what is it?"

"The reason Buddy can't go camping is 'cause he has no one to go with, I heard his mother say," went on Tom. "But we're going to Rainbow Lake—you and daddy and Ned and me. We'll have lots of room in our tent. Why couldn't we take Buddy camping with us? Say, Mom, couldn't we?"

Mrs. Gordon thought quickly. She loved Buddy almost as much as if he were her own

little boy and he and Tom were great chums, often visiting each other for weeks at a time. Once Tom had spent part of the summer with Buddy at his grandfather's farm.

"Oh, Mom, couldn't Buddy come to camp with me and let his folks go off by themselves?" cried Tom. "Couldn't he?"

"Why, yes, I suppose he could, if they would let him," said Mrs. Gordon, slowly. "We have plenty of room and I'd love to have Buddy with us."

"Hurray! Hurray! Hurray!" shouted Tom, throwing his cap into the air. "Then we can catch wild animals together in our traps! Oh, hurray! Won't I surprise Buddy! I'll go tell him now! Hurray!"

And off he raced to tell the big surprise.

CHAPTER IV

BUDDY GOES TO CAMP

"BUDDY! Buddy! Whoo-oo!" called Tom as soon as he had reached his chum's house. "Whoo-oo, Buddy!"

"Whoo-oo!" answered Buddy, looking from the window of his room, up stairs, where he was packing some of his things to take on the long train journey.

"Come on down!" went on Tom, shuffling his feet about in the grass at the side of the house. "Hurry down!"

"Can't," Buddy answered. "I'm packing my things."

"Aw, come on down!" cried Tom. "I got great news for you—big news—a surprise!"

"A surprise?" Buddy began to forget some of his sadness and Brick, who was in the bedroom with him, knowing by his mas-

ter's voice that something jolly was coming, began to wag his tail. Up to now, knowing, somehow, that Buddy felt badly, Brick had not done this.

"A big surprise!" went on Tom. "Oh, Buddy! I can't wait until you come down here to tell you. This is the surprise! You're going camping!"

"Camping? No, I got to go down South."

"You're coming camping with me—to Rainbow Lake!" cried Tom. "I asked my mother and she said it would be all right if your mother said so. Come on down and ask her! Hurry!"

"Honest and true?" called Buddy, poking his head farther out of his window. "No fooling?"

"Sure, honest and true! Oh, Buddy, it's great! Won't we have fun!"

"Yes, if my mother will let me go," Buddy said, rather doubtfully.

"Well, hurry down and we'll ask her."

Buddy did not wait any longer. His room

was a sight, with bits of clothing and toys scattered about, for he hardly knew what to take with him on the trip or what to leave. But now—now everything seemed different.

Mrs. Martyne was in the kitchen giving some orders to Lola Wagg, her cook, about what to do toward closing up the house for the summer. For the Martyne place would be shut when the family had gone South. And Buddy's mother was quite surprised when her little son and his chum Tom came bursting in at her, Tom crying:

"Can't Buddy come camping with me?"

"Please, Mother!" Buddy begged. "Say yes! Please!"

"My mother will take care of him," Tom went on. "And we'll have lots of fun!"

"Catching wild animals in traps," added Buddy. "But we won't hurt them and after we catch 'em we'll let 'em go again."

"Sure!" cried Tom.

"Oh, Mother, please can't I go?" Buddy got up on a chair, threw his arms around his

mother's neck and almost choked her with a "bear hug," as he kissed her.

"Oh, my goodness!" cried Mrs. Martyne, while Lola Wagg was laughing. "What's all this about, anyhow?"

"Camping!" exclaimed Tom.

"He wants me to go with him and then I won't have to bother you to take me down where Aunt Grace lives, though I love her and I'm terrible sorry she's sick!" said Buddy, all in one breath.

"It's true!" went on Tom as he saw Mrs. Martyne looking at him. "My mother said it would be all right and she's coming over in a little while to tell you so. We're going camping in about two days and Buddy can stay at our house until then and sleep with me while you and Mr. Martyne go away. Please!"

"Please!" echoed Buddy.

Mrs. Martyne sat down in a chair.

"Well," she said, slowly, "I never thought of this. It is very kind of your mother, Tom, to ask Buddy to go camping. But——"

"Here comes Ma now! Excuse me for interrupting you, Mrs. Martyne," he said, quickly, "but she'll tell you all about it."

And a little later the two mothers were busy talking while Tom and Buddy, unable to keep still, were running around the yard. Then Buddy went to get the trap which he now felt he could use after all.

"And I'll help you make one, Tom," he offered.

"Thanks! That'll be great!"

Meanwhile Mrs. Gordon was telling Mrs. Martyne that she really would like to have Buddy come camping with Tom.

"But I'm afraid Buddy will be a bother to you," said his mother, after she had admitted that she really felt sorry about having to take him away with her, for she knew he would not have a good time in a house of illness.

"No bother at all!" said Mrs. Gordon with a laugh. "Two boys are as easy to look after

as one. Easier, I think, for they'll always be together."

"Yes, Tom and Buddy will always be together," admitted Mrs. Martyne. "Well, if you think it won't be too much bother, Mrs. Gordon, and if you will let me pay Buddy's share of the expense——"

"Nonsense!" laughed Mrs. Gordon. "It doesn't cost any more to feed two boys than one, and we have plenty of beds. You let Buddy come to camp with us. He'll be all right."

"Oh, I'm sure he will. And if his father says he may I am sure I shall be glad of it. I felt so sorry for him, as he had set his heart on living in a tent this summer."

"Well, that's what he's going to do," said Tom's mother. "I'm sure Mr. Martyne will consent. Tom and Buddy can have a little tent of their own to sleep in, near our large one. We have a nice place at Rainbow Lake."

"I'm sure you have," Mrs. Martyne said. "It is very kind of you. Mr. Martyne and I

planned to take Buddy camping on Cedar Mountain this summer, but this news about my sister has upset everything."

"Yes, illness is a sad thing. But Buddy will be all right with us. He and Tom will have great times."

"I'm sure they will. Here comes Mr. Martyne now. I'll ask him about it."

Mr. Martyne had come home from his office early on hearing that his wife's sister was so ill and he was going to help Mrs. Martyne get ready for the night journey. He listened to what Mrs. Gordon had to say and agreed with her and his wife that it would be a fine thing if Buddy could go to the Rainbow Lake camp.

"If you're sure he won't bother you," said Mr. Martyne, finally.

"We'll be delighted to have Buddy," said Mrs. Gordon. "He and Tom are such chums!"

"All right, then it's settled," said Buddy's father.

"Hurray! Hurray!" cried Buddy and Tom.

The two boys, who were out in the back yard, planning to make more traps, heard the good news, gave whoops of delight and danced around. Buddy jumped up in the air and clicked his heels together as his Uncle Henry had taught him. Buddy could do this trick very well. Even Brick shared in the happiness and raced about barking wildly and wagging his tail until it is a wonder it didn't drop off.

That night, after bidding his father and mother good-bye at the railroad station, where they took the train, Buddy moved over to Tom's house with his clothes, there to stay until it was time to go to camp. The boys talked so long, after getting ready for bed, that Mrs. Gordon had to tell them she would put them in separate rooms if they did not get quiet.

And then they settled down and went to sleep.

They were up early the next morning, however, planning what they would take to camp,

of course getting ready a lot more things than they would ever need or ever be allowed to take.

"Let's go down to Mr. Tort's and get some more boxes to make traps with," proposed Tom, after a while.

"All right," Buddy said.

The boys spent the remainder of the day building traps, but when Mr. Gordon saw how many they had, and how large some of them were, he laughed and said:

"Now look here! You boys don't need any of these animal traps at Rainbow Lake. In the first place I don't believe there are any wild animals up there, and in the second place you couldn't catch 'em if there were any."

"There was a fox up there last year," said Tom.

"Well, maybe a fox, but you don't need half a dozen traps to catch one fox, and, anyhow, I don't believe you'd ever catch him. A fox is too sly and smart. And another thing; if

you want traps you can make them when you get up there."

"That's so," agreed Buddy.

"And it would be a lot of bother to put all these boxes in our auto to take with us," added Tom.

"You just can't do it!" his father said. "Our auto isn't as big as a moving van, and we've got to take other things to camp besides box traps. So leave those here."

"And we'll make some in camp," added Buddy, to which his chum agreed.

Then came a jolly time, with the boys hurrying about and getting ready for the journey. Rainbow Lake was about a day's trip in a car from Mountchester. The Gordons had been there before, but it would be Buddy's first visit.

At last came the day when, everything having been packed, and many things sent on ahead by express, they were ready to start. Buddy and Tom were so excited that they awakened before the sun was up. Little Ned,

too, was up early. Two or three times he wandered away.

"You must stay around here," his brother warned him, "or we might go away and leave you."

"I 'ist wants to find 'nother apple," Ned replied. "But I don' wants to be caught in a box."

"No, don't go in any more traps," warned Buddy.

Tom and his chum sat on the front seat of the big touring car with Mr. Gordon, while Mrs. Gordon and Ned, with as much baggage as could be gotten in, sat in the rear. They started away from the closed house, which was not far from where Buddy lived. And he was so excited by thoughts of the adventures he would have in the camp at Rainbow Lake that he wasn't at all lonesome without his father and mother. Which was a good thing. Tom's sister Lucy did not go to camp as she spent the vacation with her cousin Alice in a distant city.

It did not take long for the travelers to get out of Mountchester, and soon the auto of the camping party was rolling along a pleasant country road. They had not gone far before Buddy saw, walking toward them, a dark man.

"There's a Gypsy," whispered Buddy to his chum. "He looks like the one that made the Gypsy boy give me back Brick after he took my dog."

"No, that isn't a Gypsy," Tom said.

"What is he?" Buddy wanted to know.

"An Indian!"

"Indian?"

"Sure!"

"How can you tell, Tom?"

"Look, he's got bows and arrows, Buddy."

"Oh, so he has!" Buddy noticed, for the first time, that the dark-faced man had a bundle of bows and many arrows, with bright feathers on them, slung on his back.

"I wonder if he's on the war-path?" whispered Buddy, who had read many Indian stories. "Is he going to shoot somebody?"

Before anyone could answer, the Indian suddenly held up his hand with the palm out, almost like a traffic policeman, and Mr. Gordon brought the auto to a sudden stop. Buddy's eyes opened wide as he saw the Indian taking a bow and some arrows off his back.

"Oh, look out!" exclaimed the red-haired boy. "He's going to shoot!"

CHAPTER V

NOISES IN THE NIGHT

MR. GORDON laughed when he heard Buddy say this. So did his wife. But the two boy chums were serious. As for little Ned, he just looked at the Indian and laughed.

Truly enough, the dark man had several bows. And he had many arrows with feathers on. But he did not look at all like the Indians Buddy had seen in his story books. This Indian was dressed just as any other man might be, in a coat, trousers and shoes. He had no blanket or moccasins.

"Does he want to speak to us?" asked Mrs. Gordon as the Indian came closer to the car.

"I think he wants to sell us some of his bows and arrows," her husband answered. And that was the reason the Indian had held up his hand. Looking at Buddy and Tom with a smile, the Indian asked:

"Boys buy um Indian bow—arrow. Good for shoot um!"

"I'd like one," Tom said, "but I guess I haven't any money?" He looked questioningly at his father.

"How much are they?" asked Buddy. He had long wanted a bow and some arrows.

"Dollar," answered the Indian. "Good bow—good arrows—shoot um good!"

"I don't believe the boys had better have any such things," put in Mrs. Gordon. "They might get hurt with the sharp arrows."

"Arrows no sharp!" said the Indian, quickly. "Look!" He showed the ends of the arrows. They had blunt points.

"You couldn't shoot anything with arrows like those," said Buddy.

"They aren't sharp enough to bring down a fox," added Tom.

The Indian smiled a little as he said:

"No sharp arrows when boys play—make um sharp when go hunting. You buy?" and he held out two bows and several arrows to

Mr. Gordon. "One dollar. Good for boys in camp."

"How did you know we were going camping?" asked Buddy.

"Easy to tell," chuckled the Indian and he pointed to the things in the car. "Indian live in camp."

"Do you; where?" asked Tom, eagerly.

"Rainbow Lake," was the unexpected answer.

"You do? At Rainbow Lake? Why, that's where we're going!" cried Buddy.

"I didn't know we had any Indians camping there," Tom said.

"Not there long," went on the Indian arrow seller. "Black Horse come little while ago. Make bows—make arrows—come down here sell um. You buy? One dollar," he begged Mr. Gordon.

"Well, I don't know," said Tom's father, slowly. He was like a boy himself, in some ways. And he knew what fun his son and Buddy would have with the bows and arrows.

He thought they would be careful with them. "Would you like 'em?" he asked the lads.

"Would we?" cried Tom. "Oh, boy!"

"I've got a dollar!" Buddy said, his father having given him some spending money before leaving.

"Well, I'll treat you to this," chuckled Mr. Gordon as he took out his wallet. "You won't be nervous, will you, my dear," he asked his wife, "if the boys have bows and arrows in camp?"

"Not if they are careful and learn how to shoot," she said.

"Oh, we'll be very careful," Tom promised.

"And we'll learn how to shoot," added Buddy.

"Black Horse show boys how shoot um," said the Indian in his queer talk as Mr. Gordon handed him two one dollar bills and Tom and Buddy each eagerly grasped their weapons.

"Are you coming back to your camp at Rainbow Lake?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"Yes, lady, after sell um bows and arrows. Go back—make more—show boys how shoot um. Rainbow Lake nice place. Indian make camp there."

"How many of you are there?" asked Mr. Gordon.

The Indian thought for a moment, tucked his remaining bows and arrows under his arm and held up both hands, with the right thumb folded back on his palm.

"Nine!" exclaimed Buddy. "Nine Indians in camp at Rainbow Lake! We'll see 'em, Tom!"

"Sure!"

"Do all the Indians make bows and arrows, like you?" Mr. Gordon asked as he got ready to start the car again.

"Squaw no make arrows—bows," was the answer. "Squaws cook. Pappoose um eat all time! Black Horse—some more Indian mans —we all make bows—arrows."

"There must be a family of them up there in

the woods," said Mrs. Gordon. "I wonder where they came from?"

"Probably from Canada," her husband answered. "Rainbow Lake isn't far from Canada."

"Good-bye—maybe see um Rainbow Lake," grunted Black Horse, the Indian, as he walked along to find other customers for his bows and arrows.

"Good-bye!" echoed Tom and Buddy.

"Gee! These are great bows!" Buddy went on, testing his by pulling on the string, though he did not fit an arrow to it.

"They'll shoot dandy!" agreed his chum.

"I hope you boys will be careful," murmured Mrs. Gordon.

"Oh, they will!" her husband said. "I'll teach them how to shoot."

"I guess the Indians can do it better, Daddy," spoke Tom. "And Black Horse said he'd show us."

"Maybe he will and maybe he won't," said Mr. Gordon. "Those Indians are great rovers,

like Gypsies. They come down from Canada in the summer to sell baskets, moccasins, bead work and bows and arrows. In the fall they go back to their reservations. You may never see Black Horse at Rainbow Lake. His camping party may be too far back in the woods."

"Oh, I hope we see him," Buddy said.

"So do I," agreed Tom and then the two boys admired their bows and arrows and talked a lot about going off in the woods to hunt, with the points of the feathered shafts made into a sharp point.

"Don't worry," whispered Mr. Gordon to his wife, as she seemed nervous. "They won't kill anything."

The journey through the country to Rainbow Lake was a delightful one, and nothing happened to spoil it, not so much as a puncture. They stopped in a small city about half way there for lunch in a restaurant, and Buddy and Tom said it was a good meal.

"But not as good as we'll cook ourselves

when we get to camp and go out in the woods hunting," said Tom. "How about it, Buddy?"

"Sure! We'll cook some fine meals in camp!"

Rainbow Lake was a small summer resort. There were some cottages around the sparkling, blue body of water, and a number of camping places. It was not crowded with either cottagers or campers, and as the season was yet early not many were up there yet.

Mr. Gordon and his family owned a camp on a little cove of the lake, far enough away from others, and far enough back in the woods, so that it was almost like camping alone in the wilds. This pleased the boys.

Mr. Gordon had sent word to the man who looked after his camp to have the tents put up, the oil stove gotten in readiness for cooking and enough food and supplies sent up, so that when the party arrived, late in the afternoon, there was not much to be done.

Jim Thorn, the camp caretaker, was on hand to help unpack and while Buddy and Tom

raced about in the woods, shouting and yelling with delight, Mrs. Gordon prepared supper. Her husband and Jim Thorn got out the bedding for the cots.

"Got any apples?" asked little Ned as they gathered about the rustic table, which was set under a canvas canopy outside the big tent.

"He's crazy about apples," explained Tom with a laugh.

"And he went in a trap I made to get one," Buddy said. "Can we trap any animals up here, Mr. Thorn?"

"Or shoot any?" asked Tom, glancing at the bows and arrows which had been put on a flat stump in the midst of the camp.

"Cows, maybe, or horses!" chuckled the jolly Mr. Thorn.

"Aw, we don't want to trap cows!" murmured Buddy.

"Or shoot horses," added Tom.

"Well, those are about all the big animals you'll see up here," went on the camp custodian. "There's squirrels, chipmunks and

maybe possums and porcupines, but you want to be careful about those last."

"I know—on account of their sharp quills," spoke Tom.

"Well, then I guess we'll find enough to trap and shoot, even if they aren't very big," said Buddy.

"Sure!" agreed his chum.

"What about some Indians being camped up here, Jim?" asked Mr. Gordon.

"Yes, there are some a few miles farther up the lake. Black Horse one calls himself. He makes bows and arrows, and goes to the cities to sell 'em," explained Mr. Thorn.

"We got some!" cried Buddy and he and Tom showed their weapons.

"Um, yes," murmured Mr. Thorn. "Well, they're pretty good."

"Are those Indians all right?" asked Mrs. Gordon. "I don't just like the idea of them being around our camp."

"Oh, they're all right—not a bit wild," Mr.

Thorn said. "They're from Canada, I guess. They won't do any harm."

Buddy and Tom could not help wishing the Indians were a bit wild. It would be more fun, they thought. But there was so much to do about camp, getting ready for the night, that they soon forgot about Black Horse and the other Indians. The boys put on their old clothes, and helped Mr. and Mrs. Gordon unpack. There were lanterns to be filled with oil, though each of the boys had a little electric flashlight.

The beds were soon ready in both tents for, to their delight, Buddy and Tom were to sleep in a small tent of their own, holding two cots and the possessions of the boys, including the bows and arrows.

"Now don't get up too early and wake us," warned Mr. Gordon to his son and Buddy as they went to bed.

"I guess we'll be too sleepy to get up early," said Buddy.

So the boys went to their tent, laughing and

talking about what fun they would have in the camping days to come. Brick, who had, of course, come with his master, went with the lads, as eager as they were about this life in the woods.

"We'll let Brick sleep right at the front of the tent," proposed Buddy as they were getting ready for bed, having dropped the flaps.

"Sure," agreed Tom. "Then if he hears any noises in the night, like if a fox or a porcupine comes along, he'll growl and we can wake up and shoot it."

"We'll have our flashlights all ready," suggested Buddy.

"Put 'em under our pillows," Tom said. "And wouldn't it be great if we could shoot something good to eat?"

"I guess a fox isn't good to eat," Buddy remarked.

"No, but how about a porcupine?" asked Tom.

"Well," Buddy said, "maybe they'd be good if you could get out all the quill stickers

so they wouldn't get in your teeth. But we'll ask your father about that."

"Or Black Horse, or some of the Indians," went on Tom. "We'll find out where their camp is and go see 'em."

"Sure!" murmured Buddy. And after a while, having been warned by Mr. Gordon several times that they must get quiet and go to sleep, at last the boys did. They were sure a cot bed in a woodland tent was the most wonderful place in the world, just then.

What time it was Buddy did not know, but he was suddenly awakened in pitch black darkness, by hearing Brick growl.

"What—what's the matter, Brick?" whispered the small boy.

The dog growled again. Then Tom awakened.

"What is it?" he whispered. "Oh, how dark it is."

"Brick heard a noise," whispered Buddy. "Maybe it's a fox. Get your light and we'll go out and shoot him!"

CHAPTER VI

THE DRIFTING BOAT

THERE was silence in the dark tent of Buddy and his chum for a few seconds, silence except for the growls of Brick who was now standing up where the flaps of the canvas house had been tied together before the boys went to bed. Just a little light came in through cracks around the tent doorway and by this glow Tom and Buddy could see Brick standing there.

"Get your flashlight!" whispered Buddy to Tom.

"I'm looking for it," was the low voiced answer. "Where's yours?"

"I can't find it."

"I can't find mine, either," spoke Tom. "I put it under my pillow but now it's gone."

"So's mine! Oh," and there was a gasp of

surprise from Buddy, "maybe that Indian came and took our lights."

"I don't believe any Indian's been in here," said Tom. "The tent is fastened like it was when we went to bed."

Then Buddy, who had been searching under his pillow for the small but powerful electric flashlight, suddenly felt his fingers close on it.

"I got it!" he exclaimed. "It was inside the pillow case instead of under it."

He pulled it out, pressed the button and in a second the tent was brightly lighted.

"I've got mine, too," said Tom. "I stuck mine inside the pillow case like you. Gosh! I thought somebody had it!"

The two boys, in their pajamas, now slid out of bed, each one with his flashlight and started to tiptoe toward the tent entrance. They could see Brick standing there, his nose poked out a little way and he was growling at something.

"Get your bow and some arrows!" whispered Buddy.

"Sure! Get yours, too!" advised Tom.

They were flashing their lights on and off, for they knew that to let them glow steadily used up the batteries very quickly. And as they moved about the tent, which was brightly lighted one moment and very dark the next, Buddy suddenly stumbled and cried out.

"What's the matter?" asked Tom, coming to a sudden stop.

"I tripped over my shoes and hurt my big toe!" said Buddy. "Ouch, what a crack!"

"Never mind," consoled Tom. "We'll shoot a fox, maybe."

He again flashed his light, as did Buddy, so they had something by which to see, and then, keeping the little, electric torches aglow, they put on their shoes, not bothering to dress any more than this, and walked to the tent entrance.

"What is it, Brick? What is it?" asked Buddy, taking hold of the dog's collar.

Brick growled in answer, and seemed eager to get out, now that his two boy friends were ready to go with him.

"Get your bow and arrows!" warned Tom.

"That's right! I almost forgot 'em!" Buddy said.

"Switch your light on and leave it on," Tom next advised his chum. "Then we can see what we're doing."

"We ought to have made sharp points on our arrows," Buddy said as he snapped the switch of his light and then laid it on his bed to shine in the tent while he picked up his bow and some arrows.

"Maybe we better not try to kill a fox now," Tom said. "We'll just shoot him with the blunt arrows and tomorrow night we'll have some sharp ones."

"That's right!" agreed Buddy.

As they started out of the tent, with Brick eager to dash off ahead of them, Buddy asked:

"How we going to hold our flashlights and shoot at the same time?"

This was something Tom hadn't thought about, but in a moment he considered it and answered:

"I'll hold my light and you can shoot. Next time you can hold the light and I'll shoot."

"That's right—take turns," agreed Buddy. "Well, come on."

The small boys stepped outside the tent into the night—darkness of the woods all about them—darkness which the little flashlights did not brighten very much.

Brick pulled away from Buddy's hold on his collar as soon as they were outside the tent. And then, as Tom held his light, Buddy fitted a blunt arrow to his bow and Tom, pointing the electric torch out at arm's length cried:

"There he is! Shoot!"

"Where?"

"Over by the big tree down on the shore of the lake!"

Buddy saw some creature moving in the glow of Tom's light. It was an animal about the size of Brick. And Buddy's dog was rushing straight for it.

"Oh, I hope it isn't a wolf, for it might bite Brick," thought the red-haired boy. "But I

guess my dog could fight a fox. Anyhow I'll shoot it."

Buddy's hands trembled with eagerness but he managed to fit an arrow to the string. All the while Tom was trying to keep his light pointed at the animal that had come on a midnight visit. And Tom's hand also trembled though he tried to be brave and said:

"Hurry up, Buddy! Shoot!"

"I'm going to!"

"Well, go on!"

There was a twang of the string as the arrow shot forward and Buddy had aimed better than he knew for, all at once, there was a loud howl and a dog began to bark.

"Oh, you've shot Brick!" cried Tom.

"No I didn't," Buddy quickly answered. "I can see Brick. He wasn't near the other animal I shot at."

"Well, you hit it, whatever it was. Golly! That's great!"

"I couldn't have hurt it much with a blunt arrow," Buddy said.

There was another howl, and some more barking and then two different kinds of barks came together. One, Buddy knew, was Brick's voice, and the other seemed to be that of a second dog.

Then Buddy pulled out his flashlight and with the gleam of that and the glow from Tom's they saw a big, black dog running away with Brick chasing him.

"Oh, it was only a stray dog!" said Tom, much disappointed.

"I guess that's all it was," Buddy said. "Come back, Brick!" he ordered.

Brick came back to his master having run a little way into the woods after the strange dog, and then Buddy and Tom started to return, lighting the path with the electric torches. Now a gleam showed in the big tent where Mr. and Mrs. Gordon slept with Ned.

"What's the matter with you two boys?" called Tom's father, looking out of the flap of the canvas house.

"We heard a noise," Buddy said.

"And we thought it was a fox and Buddy shot it with an arrow but it was only another dog," Tom went on.

"You'd better go back to bed," advised Mr. Gordon, "and stop dreaming about foxes and arrows."

"It wasn't a dream," said Buddy. "It was really another dog. Maybe he came from the Indian camp."

"Well, there are always stray dogs about the woods," chuckled Mr. Gordon. "They're after scraps of food. They won't hurt you. Now go to sleep."

Which Buddy and Tom did after a while, and there were no more scares or noises that night. At least if there were the boys did not hear them and Brick did no more growling.

Next day Buddy found his arrow where he had shot it and he and Tom spent some time getting their tent neatly arranged. Then they decided to practice bow and arrow shooting, using blunt points, until Black Horse could teach them how to go hunting with sharper

weapons. Mrs. Gordon, and a woman who had come from a nearby village to help her, got the camp in shape for the summer stay and little Ned was provided with a pile of sand to play in to keep him out of mischief.

"Where's your father going?" asked Buddy of Tom as he saw Mr. Gordon getting in a boat to row up the lake, soon after breakfast.

"He's going to see about hiring a motor boat," Tom answered. "We always have a small motor boat here in camp. My father hires it of a man who has three or four."

"Jimmity! That'll be fun—a motor boat!" cried Buddy. "Can we have some rides in it?"

"Sure!"

"I wish we had a boat of our own," went on Buddy. "I mean just a rowboat or a canoe."

"That rowboat my father went off in belongs to our camp," said Tom. "After he gets the motor boat maybe you and I can have the other boat for our own."

"I hope we can," Buddy said. "I know how to row."

"So do I, a little. But say, wasn't it funny when that noise woke us up last night?"

"It sure was! I was hoping it was a fox."

"Or a wolf—so was I. But it was only a dog!"

The boys laughed over what had happened. That afternoon they took their poles and went fishing, Tom said he knew of a quiet cove where they would be sure to get bites, and soon he was sitting on the bank, while Buddy went up a little way, around a bend in the shore, and found a seat on a fallen tree from which he cast in his hook and line.

Very still and quiet it was along the lake shore. Even the fish seemed to be asleep for Buddy hadn't even a nibble. He pulled up his hook, put fresh bait on and threw it back in several times, hoping for a bite and then, suddenly, as he was looking up the lake he saw, drifting down, a row boat. There was no one in it, but the oars were in place and the boat

was coming toward Buddy blown by a little wind which gently ruffled the surface of the water.

"That's funny," Buddy murmured. "A boat and nobody in it! It's coming ashore right near me, too!"

CHAPTER VII

BUDDY'S TUMBLE

BUDDY laid his fishing pole on the grass beside him. He was thinking more about the drifting boat, now, than about catching anything on his hook.

"Anyhow, if I do get a bite," said Buddy to himself, "maybe the fish will stay caught until I can pull him in after I get that boat. If I can get it, that boat will be mine and then Tom and I can have races and play pirates and make believe be shipwrecked and all fun like that. I've never had a boat of my own. Golly! It'll be swell!"

Buddy was very anxious to get this boat and it seemed as if it had come drifting down the lake purposely for him. He saw that it would go ashore a little below where he had been sitting on the log to fish. A little farther down

than this Tom was also fishing, but Buddy could not see his camping chum and he did not know whether or not Tom had seen the boat.

"But I'll show him the boat after I get it," thought Buddy, "and I'll let him take it sometimes. Only he can use his father's rowboat after Mr. Gordon gets the motor boat he's gone after."

Nearer and nearer to shore came the drifting boat. It seemed a bit queer to the red-haired boy to watch it floating toward him, with no one at the oars. Buddy could see it had no sail, and not even one of those small, outboard motors that can be fastened to the stern of a craft.

"It will come ashore right down by that old tree," said Buddy to himself, looking at a little point where there grew a big willow which slanted out over the lake, the drooping branches almost touching the water.

Buddy was hurrying down to this little point when he happened to think of something that made him suddenly stand still.

"Oh!" he murmured. "Maybe there's an Indian in that boat! Maybe Black Horse, or some of his men, are hidden in that boat and they are just letting it drift down to our camp so we wouldn't know they were coming. Oh, I'd better be careful!"

Buddy had heard his father read to him, and he had also read for himself, many stories about Indians. Some of them were wild Indians who did not like white people. And once Buddy remembered about an Indian who stretched out flat in his bark canoe, covered himself with leaves and tree branches and let the boat drift down a lake until it went ashore.

"Nobody knew there was an Indian in that boat until it came to land," murmured Buddy, recalling this story. "And then that Indian jumped out from under the branches and whooped like anything! I'm not going near that boat until I see if there's an Indian in it."

So the blue-eyed boy held back a little from the edge of the lake and watched the boat drift nearer and nearer to shore. Then at last

Buddy could look over the sides of the boat and make out that there was nothing in it. Not an Indian or anybody.

"And there aren't any branches that he could be hiding under," Buddy told himself, for he could see the bottom of the boat plainly. He could also see a rope trailing in the water from the bow, or front end of the boat, and he noticed the oars, with their broad blades resting on the seat in the stern.

"I guess somebody forgot to tie this boat after they finished rowing in it," thought Buddy, "or if they tied it the knot came loose and the boat drifted away. And if nobody comes after the boat I'm going to keep it for mine while I'm here in camp."

The boat came gently ashore and after carefully looking it over, and making sure it didn't leak, Buddy stepped in, pushed off with one of the oars and then began to row down the shore and around the point where he had left Tom fishing. He saw his chum on the bank just pulling in a fine fish.

"Oh, that's a dandy!" cried Buddy.

Tom was so surprised to look up and see Buddy coming along in a boat that, for the moment, the fish was forgotten. Then Tom landed it with a flop on the grass back of him and asked:

"Where'd you get the boat?"

"It came drifting down the lake," was the answer. "I saw it up where I was fishing, only I haven't caught anything yet, and it came ashore and I got in. It's a dandy boat!"

"Sure it is!" agreed Tom. "Whose is it?"

"I don't know. But if nobody comes after it I can keep it; can't I, while I'm in camp?"

"I don't see why not," Tom answered. "But it must belong to somebody and they'll come after it in a day or so. Lots of times boats get loose from the camps around the lake and drift away. But always the owners come after 'em. A boat drifted to our camp last year and I was going to keep it only a man came and took it."

"Well, maybe nobody will come after this boat," said Buddy hopefully.

"Maybe," agreed Tom. "Anyhow, we got it now and let's get in it and do our fishing from it. We can catch bigger fish out a ways from shore."

"You caught one," Buddy said. "I haven't had even a bite."

"Well, you'll have some bites and catch some fish when we get out in the boat," said Tom.

Both boys could swim well, their fathers had seen to that, and they both knew how to row a boat and paddle a canoe. Mrs. Gordon had said they might go out in boats when the weather was calm if they did not go too far from shore.

"And we won't go far out," Buddy said as Tom got in with him and Buddy began to pull back to where he had left his pole. "Do you want to row, Tom?" he asked his chum.

"Now you row, it's your boat—until somebody comes for it."

The two camping boys had lots of fun fish-

ing from the strange boat that had come drifting down the shore. Tom knew of many camps and campers around Rainbow Lake but he did not know to whom the boat belonged. Buddy was delighted when he caught his first fish and after that he and Tom had good luck and caught enough so they could be fried for dinner.

"Now we'll row back to the dock by your camp, Tom," said Buddy when they grew tired of the sport. "I guess your father and mother will be surprised; won't they, to see me with a boat."

"I guess they will," Tom agreed, and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon were. Mr. Gordon had come back with the motor boat he had hired for the season and asked Buddy about the strange craft tied at his dock.

"You may keep it until some one comes after it," Tom's father agreed, when he heard what had happened.

"Now we each have a rowboat," Tom said, for since his father had the one with a motor

in it he would not need the smaller boat that belonged to his camp.

Buddy and Tom thought they would have a little race, one boy in each rowboat, after bringing home the fish, but Mrs. Gordon said:

"I need water, boys—some water from the lake for washing dishes and clothes. Who's going to fill up the tank for me?"

"I will!" cried Tom.

"I'll help!" offered Buddy.

In the camp at Rainbow Lake there were no hot and cold water faucets such as were in the houses at Mountchester. The drinking water had to be carried from a spring back in the woods and the water for washing came from the lake. There was a tank back of the big tent and it was the duty of the boys to keep this filled for Mrs. Gordon. Mr. Gordon also told Tom always to see that there was a pail of fresh drinking water from the spring kept on the little stand at the tent entrance.

Each carrying a pail, Tom and Buddy went to the edge of the lake, and when the pails were

filled the boys started up the little slope that led to the clearing where the tents were. Then Buddy had an idea.

"Let me see if I can carry the two pails of water," he said.

"Both at once?" cried Tom.

"Sure!"

"You can't do it!"

"Well, let me try." Buddy was quite ambitious, always wanting to do something new or different. So he took Tom's pail, as well as his own, and started up the hill with them. It was hard and heavy work, but Buddy managed to go a little way with his load. Then, suddenly, his foot slipped on a round stick, he felt himself falling and with a surprised shout of his own and a shout of warning from Tom, down he tumbled, spilling both pails of water and getting very wet.

"Oh! Oh! Oh!" yelled Tom, leaping about and laughing. "Oh, what a tumble!"

CHAPTER VIII

TOM'S BIG FISH

MRS. GORDON came hurrying to the front of the tent when she heard Tom's excited shouts and the outcry from Buddy as he fell. She saw the red-haired boy, soaking wet, lying on the ground with the two empty pails near him, and Tom capering about.

"What's the matter?" she called. "Did a bee sting you, Tom?"

"A bee?" cried Tom, laughing harder than ever. "No, Mother!"

"Did one sting Buddy?"

"Oh, no," Buddy answered for himself. "I just slipped and fell. What you laughing at?" he asked Tom.

"Oh, you look so funny!" chuckled Tom. "And you fell down so funny and you got all wet so funny! Ha! Ha! Ha!"

"Well, I don't feel very funny," spoke Buddy as he got up. "Hey, Brick, stop it!" he yelled. For the dog, thinking something serious had happened to his little master, was licking Buddy's face. "I'm wet enough without you doing that!"

Then Buddy had to laugh himself, for he knew how funny he must look to Tom, all soaking wet as he was.

"What happened?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"Oh, Buddy thought he could carry two pails of water at a time," Tom said.

"And so I could, only I slipped," Buddy made haste to say. "I'll try it again and I'll do it!" He was very determined.

"No, please don't," spoke Mrs. Gordon. "One pail is enough for each of you boys. There is no need to hurry. Did you hurt yourself, Buddy?"

"Oh, no'm, thank you," he answered.

"He didn't hurt the pails, either," Tom chuckled. "Nor the water, either. He didn't hurt the water! Ha! Ha!"

"Tom, please don't laugh," his mother said. "Buddy might have been hurt."

"Oh, I'm not hurt at all!" the blue-eyed boy hurried to say. "And it doesn't matter about my clothes being wet for they're old ones. Only I'm sorry I spilled the water."

"There's plenty more in the lake!" Tom said. Then as he started to laugh again he also ran, for he saw Buddy with a big cone from a pine tree ready to throw at him—not that a pine cone would hurt if it hit him, but Tom just felt like running.

"Come back here, Tom," his mother called. "You must help Buddy carry the water. And each of you must only take one pail."

"I guess that's better," Buddy said as he started back for the lake.

"Don't you want to change your clothes?" asked Mrs. Gordon as Tom took the other pail.

"Oh, no'm, thank you. I'll soon dry," Buddy said. "It feels nice to be wet 'cause it's a hot day."

When the water tank was filled Buddy was

almost dry again, and he was quite dry by dinner time when he and Tom helped eat some of the fish they had caught.

"When you going to catch apples?" asked little Ned. "I likes apples."

"Apples don't grow in these woods," Tom said.

"But maybe we could go to a farm and find some," suggested Buddy. "Are there any farms around Rainbow Lake?"

"Some, on the other side," Mr. Gordon said. "We may go to one for a picnic some day."

Hearing Ned speak of apples made Buddy and Tom think of setting a trap as they had done in Mountchester and that afternoon they made one from an old packing box. They rigged up the string and stick and then sat hiding in the bushes for over an hour, waiting for some animal to go under the upraised box to get the piece of bread they used for bait.

Once a chipmunk, very pretty in his striped coat of fur, ran under the box and began nibbling at the bread.

"Quick! Pull the string!" cried Tom to Buddy.

Buddy pulled. But in some way the cord was caught around a stone on the ground and it wouldn't work. Buddy couldn't pull out the stick to make the box fall, and the twitching of the cord, and the noise the boys made in their excitement, frightened the chipmunk away so he wasn't caught.

"Anyhow it's just as well we didn't catch him," Buddy said.

"Sure!" agreed Tom. "He was only a little fellow. We want to catch something big!"

"That's right," Buddy said. "Maybe we'd better put a piece of meat in for bait. Foxes and wolves like meat."

But some bacon, which Buddy put in with the slice of bread, drew no larger wild animals to the trap. Then the boys, after another hour spent sitting under a bush ready to pull the string, grew weary of this sort of fun.

"Let's go down and look at my boat," suggested Buddy.

"And I'll get in mine and we'll have a race," Tom agreed.

This the boys did, the course being up and down the little cove in front of the Gordon camp. The oars were pretty heavy for Tom and Buddy to pull, so they didn't go very fast. But Buddy's boat was lighter than the camp craft in which Tom rowed, so Buddy won the little race.

"I'll win next time," Tom declared.

That afternoon the boys went in swimming and when night came they were so tired that they went to bed early. They had their flashlights in readiness under their pillows, and not inside the cases this time, so if they heard a noise they could get up and see what made it. But Brick gave no alarm and the night passed peacefully.

The next day Mr. Gordon asked several other men whose tents were up or down the lake from the camp where Buddy and Tom were having such good times, if they knew who owned the drifting boat Buddy had found.

But when they had looked at it they could not say.

"So I guess it's your boat to keep, at least for a while," Tom said to his chum.

"I'm glad!" Buddy exclaimed. "I've always wanted a boat of my own. Oh, it's great to come camping and live in a tent!"

Really he and Tom didn't stay in their tent much. They were only in it long enough to sleep, dress and undress. The remainder of the time they were playing in the woods or on the lake. Buddy's face and arms began to get a dusky red-tan in color, almost like his hair. He was a hearty, healthy, happy boy and so was Tom.

"Let's go fishing out in your boat!" Tom proposed the next day after a jolly night spent around a camp fire in front of the tents, when he and Buddy had toasted marshmallows.

"Sure!" Buddy agreed. "I'll get my pole."

"And we'll take our bows and arrows," said Tom.

"What for, to shoot fish?"

"No, you can't shoot fish!" Tom said, laughing.

"Sure you can!" declared Buddy. "I mean Indians can. I read about 'em doing it in a book."

"Well, I guess we can't shoot any fish with our arrows," Tom said. "But we might see a big water rat or a snake and shoot them."

"Golly, that would be great!" cried Buddy. So in addition to the poles and lines they put their bows and arrows in Buddy's boat and rowed away up the lake promising Mrs. Gordon they would be very, very careful.

They anchored their craft by tossing overboard a large stone to which a rope was fastened, the other end being tied to a ring in the bow of the boat and for a time they looked for water rats or snakes. But they saw neither of these creatures swimming in the lake so they began to fish.

Buddy had the first luck, and pulled in a large perch.

"I wish I could catch one as big as that!"

exclaimed Tom, and then, all of a sudden, he yanked on his pole and cried:

"Oh, I've got a big fish! A whopper! Watch me pull him in!"

His pole bent like an Indian bow and Tom leaned far back over the side of the boat as he began pulling up from the water what seemed to be a great fish.

Then, as quick as a wink, Tom's line broke and, having nothing to pull against, Tom fell over backward, right across the side of the boat. Into the water he fell with a great splash.

"Oh, look out!" cried Buddy. But it was too late.

Dropping his pole, Buddy moved to the side over which his chum had fallen. The boat was still rocking with the movement Tom had made in trying to land what he thought was a big fish.

"Tom! Tom!" called Buddy.

He looked at the swirling water, marked

with circles and rings which grew wider and wider, but could not see Tom. Then he called:

"Tom! Where are you?"

But poor Tom did not answer. He was out of sight under the water.

"I've got to get him out!" cried Buddy and he began to take off his shoes so he could dive in for the rescue.

CHAPTER IX

BUDDY FINDS A CAVE

HOWEVER, Buddy found out that, after all, he did not have to jump in to rescue Tom. For the red-haired boy had no sooner taken off his shoes, and poised on the edge of the boat for a leap into the water, than Tom came bobbing up close to the side of the craft.

"Oh, Tom!" cried Buddy. "I was afraid you were drowned!"

"I—I'm all—all right!" Tom gasped. He couldn't speak very well on account of the water being up his nose and in his mouth. He knew the first thing to do, always, when one falls into the water is not to breathe and to keep the mouth closed. Tom had done this but his bath was such a sudden one that, in spite of his efforts, he had swallowed a little water and it choked him.

"Here! Catch hold!" cried Buddy, holding the large end of his fishing pole out toward his chum. Tom was a little way off from the boat.

"I'll grab it—in—in just a—a second!" Tom panted. He was now beginning to strike out and swim, though it was hard work with all his clothes and his shoes on. But he was pretty good at swimming.

In a few seconds he had pushed himself close enough to the boat so he could grasp Buddy's pole. Then Buddy pulled Tom closer and in another moment he could get hold of the side of the boat. There he held himself up for a little while with his head well above water, to get his breath. He was in no more danger.

But Tom knew better than to try to climb over the side of the boat to get in. This is very dangerous to do in a canoe, and also dangerous in most row boats unless they are very big. Tom's father, as had Buddy's, had told him if ever he fell out of a boat to go to the bow or stern and hoist himself over the end and into

the craft that way. A boat tips very easily from one side or the other, but doesn't tip dangerously from either the bow or stern end.

"I'll get in at the stern," said Tom, when he had rested a moment, and he soon scrambled safely in, with water dripping from him all over.

"I'm as wet as Brick gets when he goes in swimming!" said Tom with a little laugh.

"Well, as long as you don't shake yourself the way Brick does, and give me a shower bath, it's all right!" chuckled Buddy. "What made you jump in?"

"I didn't jump in!" Tom answered.

"You didn't?"

"Of course I didn't! I was pulling to get up that big fish and my line broke and I was pulling so hard I lost my balance and fell in before I knew it."

"Oh," said Buddy. "Well, I'm glad you're out. I was afraid you'd be drowned."

"I couldn't get my breath at first," Tom answered. "And I went down pretty deep.

Then I swam a little below water so I wouldn't come up under the boat and bang my head on it."

"Yes, that's a good thing to do," Buddy agreed.

Tom now took off his shoes, emptying them of water and wringing as much as he could out of his stockings. He also took off his trousers and shirt and did the same with them.

"I guess I can sit around in my underwear until they dry out," he said.

"Sure," agreed Buddy, "it's nice and warm." And then, as he saw his chum gazing about in the boat, he asked: "What you looking for?"

"Where's that fish?"

"What fish?"

"The big one I tried to pull in just before I went overboard."

"You didn't pull any fish in—your line broke," chuckled Buddy.

"Oh, that's so! Gosh! It must have been a

terrible big fish to be heavy enough to break my line!"

"Maybe the hook was caught on a stone or a sunken log," suggested the blue-eyed boy.

"Maybe. I guess that was it," Tom said. But they never found out for the hook and most of the line was on the bottom of the lake. However, Tom had some extra hooks and another line and he soon rigged his pole again and was once more fishing.

Tom and Buddy had pretty good luck, in spite of the little accident, and before they pulled up the stone anchor to row ashore Tom had caught the biggest fish of the day, a fine, large perch.

"You had good luck," said Buddy. "It's going to be my turn to fall overboard next time."

"You'd better not!" warned Tom. "It wasn't any fun, though I don't mind diving in when I have my bathing suit on."

The warm wind had pretty well dried out his clothes by this time so he and Buddy rowed

back to the camp dock with their fish. And when they told Mrs. Gordon what had happened she said she was glad Tom knew how to take care of himself when he fell in. But she warned them to be careful, always, when out in the boat. This they promised to do.

"I wish I knew who owned that boat," said Buddy that night as he and Tom went down to the dock to make sure both craft were securely tied, as often a wind blew over the lake after dark.

"It is queer," Tom admitted. "It's a good boat and if it drifted away from some camp, as it must have, you'd think the people would come looking for it."

"Yes," Buddy agreed. "When anybody loses anything in Mountchester they advertise in the paper about it. But there isn't any newspaper at Rainbow Lake. Well, I hope I can always keep this boat for mine."

"It looks as if you were going to," Tom said. "You can leave it up here when we have to close the camp to go back to school in the fall.

And it will be here when you come up next year."

"School!" murmured Buddy. "I don't like to think about it; do you?"

"I should say not!" cried Tom. "Not now, anyhow, when we're having so much fun."

"But I don't know as I can come camping up here next year," Buddy said. "I wouldn't be here now only my father and mother had to go see Aunt Grace."

"Well, I'm glad you could come with me," spoke Tom. "It's lots more fun with two boys in a camp than for one alone."

"Sure," agreed Buddy. He missed his father and mother a little, but this was only at night when it came time for him and Tom to go to their cots in their own small tent. However, the feeling of loneliness did not last long with Buddy. There was Brick to keep him company, and his dog was almost like part of his home. And there was Tom. He and Tom talked in their tent about what they had done during the day and what they would do when

the sun rose again. Often Mr. Gordon had to call from where he was in the larger tent with his wife and Ned, telling the two lively boys to stop talking and go to sleep.

Since he had come to camp, Buddy had received a letter from his mother, telling him that she and his father had safely reached the home of Aunt Grace down South, and had found Mrs. Martyne's sister very ill. But she would get better with good nursing, Buddy's mother wrote him. So he really had nothing to worry about except the fear that the owner of the boat he had found would come and take it away.

"And of course I want whoever owns it to get it," Buddy said. "But it's lots of fun having a boat of my own."

So the camping days were filled with fun for the two lads, and often they took Ned with them on little trips to the woods, or for a row around the cove where the water wasn't deep. Ned was learning to swim and went in bathing with Tom and Buddy several times.

The two chums often went hunting in the woods with their bows and arrows, but they never shot anything, though they let many arrows fly at squirrels, chipmunks and birds. They weren't cruel, but just thoughtless and Mrs. Gordon told them it wasn't right to shoot at the poor woodland creatures. So, after a while, Tom and Buddy decided to shoot only at trees, or at a fox or wolf if they saw one.

"The birds and squirrels are perfectly safe!" chuckled Mr. Gordon when his wife told him about the hunting of the boys. "They'll never hit anything with those arrows. But it's fun for them to think they might."

"They've given up trying to catch anything in the queer trap that Buddy made," said Tom's mother.

"Yes, they might as well!" and Mr. Gordon laughed again. "But they are having a good time, even though they can't trap or shoot anything."

One day Mr. and Mrs. Gordon planned to

take a trip in the motor boat to visit some friends on the other side of the lake. They would take Ned with them.

This left Buddy and Tom free to do as they pleased, for they said they didn't want to go visiting, even at the prospect of a motor boat ride. So Mrs. Gordon arranged a lunch for them, to be left in the refrigerator in the dining tent, and told them she would be back before it was time for the evening meal.

"Play around and do as you please, only be careful," she told the two boys.

"Yes'm, we will!" promised Buddy.

"Don't worry," advised Tom, trying to balance a pine cone on his nose.

The boys roamed about camp for a little while, did some "chores," such as filling the water tank and bringing in a fresh pail from the spring, and then Buddy exclaimed:

"Say, let's take the lunch your mother left for us and go off in the woods and eat it!"

"That'll be swell fun!" cried Tom. "We'll pretend we're Indians!"

"Sure!" said Buddy. And as they got the food from the ice box he added: "It's queer we never saw that Indian Black Horse who sold us the bows and arrows. He said he was coming back up here to his camp and show us how to shoot."

"I guess he wouldn't come up until he sold all his bows and arrows," answered Tom, "and maybe he hasn't done that yet."

"Maybe. Anyhow we're having a lot of fun, so I don't care if we shoot anything with the arrows or not."

"I don't either. Now we'll take a lot of lunch 'cause it makes you hungry to walk in the woods."

"And we'll take some for Brick," added Buddy, for of course the dog would go with them.

There were several trails through the woods back of the Gordon camp at Rainbow Lake and Tom knew some of them. He and Buddy decided to take the broadest trail, which was plain to follow.

"Some day we'll go off in the woods and make a new trail for ourselves," Buddy decided. "That'll be fun—to find our own way."

"Sure," agreed Tom. "Maybe we might get lost, though."

"That would be fun, too," declared Buddy.

"Yes, if we weren't lost too long and had something to eat," Tom agreed.

So with Brick sometimes bursting through the bushes behind them, but more often running on ahead to scare up birds which whirred off through the trees, Buddy and Tom tramped along the trail. They had a good time in the woods, pretending they were Indians looking for white settlers, and at last they grew tired and hungry. But they came to a little open place where there was a spring, and there they sat down to eat their lunch.

After lunch Tom decided he was going to take a little rest on a bed of soft, green moss beneath the trees. But Buddy didn't feel sleepy so he said he would walk off in the woods a little way to see what he could find.

He and Brick roamed away together, leaving Tom asleep.

For a time Buddy kept to the trail, making sure, by looking around now and then, that he could find the way back to where Tom was sleeping. And, after a while, Buddy was farther from the trail and the little open glade than he knew.

"I wonder what this is?" said Buddy as he saw a hole in the side of a wooded hill—a hole partly screened by bushes. "Maybe a fox has his den in here." Buddy pushed through the bushes and, all of a sudden, he found out what the hole was, for he toppled in, feet first and went sliding down into a cave.

"Oh!" cried Buddy as he landed rather hard on the bottom of the dark hole into which he had toppled through the fringe of bushes. "Oh, where am I?" And then he heard a rattling of stones, the opening of the cave over his head darkened and he saw a big animal coming in.

CHAPTER X

SLEEPING OUT

BUDDY had several queer feelings all at once. At first he had been much surprised at finding that the hole back of the bushes was a cave—how big he did not know. Then, before he had a chance to do any thinking about it, he had fallen in because he went too near the edge and because it was such a sudden, steep slide into the darkness.

For a moment after he had started to slide in, Buddy feared it might be a very deep cave into which he had tumbled and he also feared lest he might never get out again. But when his feet soon landed on the bottom, after a fall of perhaps six or seven feet, Buddy wasn't so frightened, though, even then, he didn't know how he was going to get out. For the edge of the hole where he had slipped was of smooth

rock, and he could not get a foot or a hand hold.

"Though," thought Buddy, "it's a good thing I sort of slid in instead of falling in hard, 'cause I didn't get much hurt."

Indeed, except for being a little shaken up by his sliding fall, Buddy wasn't hurt at all, and he was going to turn around and try to scramble up out of the cave when he saw that animal darkening the hole and coming in after him.

"Gosh! Maybe it's a bear!" thought Buddy and this was the worst of all the feelings he had since he so queerly and suddenly discovered the cave.

And then, a moment later, he heard a bark he very well knew and he joyfully cried:

"Brick!"

Of course it was Brick, his dog who, missing his master, after having run ahead along the trail, had turned to find him. Then, seeing Buddy disappear down the hole, Brick had at once scrambled in after him.

"Stay out, Brick! Keep out!" Buddy called. For it came to him like a flash in the moving pictures that if he couldn't get out of the cave he would need help, and if Brick came in, and the dog couldn't get out, either, there would be no way of sending him to get help.

"Keep out, Brick!" Buddy called again. But Brick wanted to be with his master so down the slippery, rock-slide entrance to the cave the dog came tumbling. A moment later he was capering about Buddy, jumping all over him and trying to lick his face.

"Did you think I was lost, Brick?" Buddy asked, though he and his pet had been parted only a little while.

Brick answered with some joyous barks and then looked up at the hole by which light came into the cave as much as to ask how he and Buddy were going to get out again.

As for Buddy, now that he was down in the big hole, which he knew was a cave, he wanted to see how large it was and how far back under the hill it went.

"But I guess I'd better see about getting out first," he said.

However, when he tried to scramble up the smooth, big rock that formed the front part of the cave he found he could not do it. The rock was too steep and too slippery. It was like trying to climb up the peak roof of a house, only, of course, there was no danger of falling or sliding very far.

Buddy, on his hands and knees, would crawl a little way up the rock, with Brick scrambling beside him, and then both boy and dog would slip back to the bottom of the cave which was covered with dried sticks, leaves and grass blown in by the wind. These made a soft cushion on which to fall.

Again and again Buddy tried to climb up, only to fall back, as did his dog, until at last the red-haired lad said:

"We'll never get out this way, Brick. We've got to yell for somebody to help us. I'll yell and you bark and maybe Tom will wake up and come here."

So Buddy began to yell and Brick, knowing something was wrong, began to bark. But for more than ten minutes nothing happened, and Buddy was afraid Tom would never come to find him and that he and Brick might have to stay in the cave all night.

"It wouldn't be so bad if we had something to eat," Buddy murmured. But all the food had been left back in the little glade where Tom was taking a nap.

At last, however, Tom awakened and, missing Buddy and Brick, began to look for them. Tom walked a little way along the trail but did not see his chum or his dog and then Tom went into the woods where there was no path.

"Buddy!" he called. "Buddy! Buddy! Where are you?"

And in a short time Tom had wandered near the cave, though he really didn't know it was there, and then he heard Buddy's shouts and Brick's barks.

"What's the matter?" cried Tom.

"I'm down in a cave and I can't get out,"

Buddy answered. "Come over this way! Brick is with me!"

"Well, keep on hollering so I can tell where you are," Tom said, for of course, Buddy being down in a hole, couldn't be seen.

But by listening to his chum's shouts, Tom at last found the cave and he was much surprised to see the hole in the side of the hill.

"Is it big and deep?" he called down to Buddy, whose head he could just make out several feet below him.

"I don't know yet," was the answer. "After you find a way to get me and Brick out then we can both come down in here with our flashlights and see how far back the cave goes."

"That'll be swell!" cried Tom.

"But get me out, first," begged Buddy.

"Reach up your hands and maybe I can pull you out," advised Tom. But Buddy was too far below him in the hole, and only when Tom stretched out on the ground and thrust his arms into the hole, could he reach his

chum's upraised hands. And in that position Tom couldn't do any pulling.

"You'll have to go get a rope and lower it down to me," Buddy said. "Go ahead back to camp. It won't take you long and I'm not afraid."

"Yes, I guess that's the best way," Tom said. But as he got up to hurry back to camp, he saw something that made him shout:

"I won't have to go get a rope!"

"Why not?" asked Buddy.

"Because here's a long piece of wild grapevine. It's as good as any rope. I'll lower the end to you and then you can get out."

With his knife Tom cut a long, slender piece of the vine which was twined about a dead tree. It was quite as strong as a rope and the end was soon lowered to Buddy in the cave.

"I guess maybe I better tie a loop around Brick first," Buddy said. "Then you can pull him up. 'Cause if you pull me up first Brick can't put the loop around himself and we'd

never get him up. He'd have to stay down here."

"All right, I'll rescue Brick first," Tom said.

The dog was a little frightened at being put in the grapevine loop, but Buddy spoke to him and calmed him and then, with Tom pulling on the upper end of the vine, and Buddy pushing from below while Brick helped himself as much as he could by scrambling up the slippery rock, at last he was hoisted out of the cave.

"Now your turn!" called Tom to his chum as he took a turn of the upper end of the vine about an old stump so it wouldn't slip.

It wasn't hard work for Buddy, by the aid of the grapevine, to get out of the cave and soon he and Tom were together again.

"Gosh, that was quite an adventure!" Buddy exclaimed.

"I'll say it was!" echoed Tom.

"And we'll have packs of fun exploring

that cave when we get our flashlights," went on Buddy.

"Sure! But now I want to get a drink at the spring. And is there anything left to eat?"

"Sure! Plenty!"

A little later the boys and dog were back in the little clearing and Buddy was eating sandwiches, telling his chum, between bites, how he had found the cave and slid in.

"I didn't know there was a cave around our camp," Tom said.

"Oh, Rainbow Lake is a dandy place to come for a vacation," Buddy declared. "I'm going to ask my father to buy a camp up here."

"Sure! Right next to ours!" exclaimed Tom. "That'll be great."

When the boys got back to camp, and, a little later Mr. and Mrs. Gordon arrived in a motor boat from calling on friends across the lake, there was rather an exciting time as Tom and Buddy told what had happened.

"But you boys mustn't go in that cave again unless I'm with you," decided Mr. Gordon. "I must explore it a bit before you try to see how big it is. There may be deep holes where you'd fall in. I'll take you there when I get a chance."

"Maybe it's an Indian cave," suggested Buddy.

"Or one where there's buried treasure," added Tom.

"Don't hope for too much!" chuckled Mr. Gordon. "I think it's only an old bear's den."

"There wasn't any bear there while I was in it," said Buddy.

"And a good thing for you there wasn't!" said Tom's mother with a laugh. "My! You boys are certainly having adventures!"

"Dandy ones!" Buddy said. "I'm so glad you let me come camping with you."

"We're glad to have you," Mrs. Gordon said.

For the next two days Buddy and Tom teased Mr. Gordon to take them to explore the

cave, but he hadn't time so they had to wait. Then one afternoon Buddy had a new idea.

"Say, Tom," he began, "I think we ought to take a couple of nights and sleep out in the woods."

"How do you mean?"

"Well, I mean like the Boy Scouts. You and I are going to be Scouts as soon as we're old enough, and we ought to practice now, sleeping out alone in the woods."

"You mean without a tent?"

"Sure, and without any cots to sleep on. Just take our blankets and some grub and at night we'll make a camp fire and cook what we want to eat and then we'll roll up in the blankets and go to sleep."

"It'll be swell—great!" cried Tom, his eyes sparkling.

"Wonderful!" exclaimed Buddy. "Let's go ask your mother."

At first Mrs. Gordon did not think it would be wise for the boys to do this, but when she spoke to her husband about it he said:

"Why not? Let them do it. I did it when I was a boy. It will do them good to rough it a bit. But I think," he said, with a twinkle in his eyes, "that they won't stick it out."

"What do you mean?" asked Mrs. Gordon.

"I mean that now it seems a grand thing to them—while they're talking about it. But once they get off in the dark woods all alone, and try to roll up in blankets to sleep, they'll want to give it up and come back to their cots. But let them try."

"All right," said Tom's mother.

So that night, after the boys had eaten a good supper, they packed some "grub," as they called it, took their blankets in a roll and with Brick for company they set off along a trail. They did not know just where they would sleep, but it would be somewhere along a certain path through the woods, they told Mr. Gordon.

"Well, good luck, boys!" Tom's father called to them as they started off. "I hope you sleep well!"

"Oh, we will!" they said, bravely enough.

It was only dusk when they started out, but soon the shadows of night came on and soon the last gleams of twilight faded as they walked beneath the trees.

"Gosh, it's getting awful dark," said Tom, after a while.

"Yes, it is. But you aren't afraid; are you?" asked Buddy.

"Of course not! We'll sleep in the open and show 'em we can rough it. But—say——" Tom suddenly stopped.

"What's the matter?" asked Buddy.

"Did you—did you see some—some animal walking over there by those trees?" asked Tom in a low voice as he pointed off in the darkness.

CHAPTER XI

IN THE RAIN

BUDDY came to a stop close beside his chum, and both boys were glad to see that Brick was near by. While it was night there was enough light coming from the stars, and from a new moon, shaped like a slice of watermelon, for them to see a little. And Tom had seen something. So had Buddy.

"What was it?" whispered Tom, and even his whisper sounded quite loud in the silent, dark woods.

"It was an animal—with four legs," Buddy said.

"Of course it had four legs!" exclaimed Tom, almost ready to laugh and then he thought better of it. "All animals have four legs."

"I mean this one was walking on its four legs," Buddy explained.

"All animals walk on their four legs," objected Tom as he strained his eyes for another sight of what he had seen among the trees.

"Well, I mean," Buddy went on, "that some animals, like bears or monkeys, walk on their two hind legs sometimes. But this animal was walking on all four legs."

"Oh," spoke Tom and then, as the new moon, which had gone behind a little cloud, came out brighter, Tom cried: "There it is again!"

Buddy now saw, as plainly as did his chum, some large animal crashing through the underbrush and making a great deal of noise. But the queer part of it was that Brick didn't bark or even growl. He seemed to think the animal was not one to be feared by a good dog, however much boys might be frightened. Then Buddy noticed this and said:

"It's funny Brick doesn't growl, like he did the other night in the tent when that strange dog came around."

"I guess this animal isn't a dog," said Tom in a low voice.

They both stood there, trying to see through the gloom of the woods, and listening to the noise of the animal. The sounds seemed to be fainter now, which might mean that the animal was going away. But suddenly it seemed to turn, the noise became louder and Buddy cried:

"Here it comes!"

"We ought to have our bows and arrows!" shouted Tom.

Then he and Buddy began to run. They thought there wasn't much sense standing to fight some strange animal without any bows and arrows to shoot. Away they ran through the gloomy woods, Brick trailing after them. And the dog seemed to be wondering why in the world the two little lads were running away. For Brick seemed to think there was nothing to alarm him.

Suddenly Tom caught his foot in a tree root and fell down. Buddy was so close behind

his chum that he, too, fell and both went down in a heap. Behind them came the crashing sound of the running animal.

But before the boys could scramble to their feet and get out of the way, Buddy happened to look up from where he lay. Just then the moon came out a little brighter and by the gleam of it he saw what the animal was and called to Tom.

"It's only a horse!"

"A horse?"

"Yes. Just a horse running loose in the woods. Ha! Ha!"

"Ha! Ha!" laughed Tom, also. "Only a horse. Gosh, weren't we silly to run from a horse?"

"We sure were!" chuckled Buddy. "But we couldn't tell what it was in the dark."

"That's right—we couldn't tell. But I guess Brick knew."

"Sure, Brick knew it was a horse all right," Buddy agreed. "That's why he didn't bark. Well, I'm glad it was only a horse."

"So am I as long as we didn't have our bows and arrows. I wonder whose horse it is?"

"Oh, maybe it belongs to that Indian," suggested Buddy. "The one your father bought the arrows from."

"Oh, maybe!" agreed Tom. "And say," he went on as the horse tramped around in the bushes, making a great crackling sound which, however, no longer frightened the boys, "say, maybe if we caught that horse the Indian would like it and he'd give us more arrows."

"Maybe," said Buddy. "Let's try!"

But it took only a little while for the boys to find out that it wasn't easy to catch that horse in the dark woods. They ran toward the animal but it dashed off among the trees and now it grew dark again as the moon went under a cloud so they soon gave it up.

"I guess we better find a good place to sleep," suggested Buddy.

"I guess so," spoke Tom. "I'm tired. We'll make our camp and eat something and go to sleep."

"What fun we'll have!" Buddy said. "We'll fry those hot dogs we brought with us," for they had agreed to do some cooking over a fire.

By means of their flashlights they got back on the trail and a little later they had found the clearing where they had planned to sleep. There was a good place beneath some pine trees where the ground was covered with the fragrant, brown needles. Here the boys made their night camp, spreading out their blankets and getting out the bundles of food.

They found a flat rock on which to build a fire, for they had been told to be careful about this, as a blaze spreads rapidly in the dry woods. Soon they were roasting the sausages held over the flames on a long, toasting fork which Mrs. Gordon had given them.

"Gosh, this is swell!" exclaimed Buddy as they sat about the fire, eating the "hot dogs" wrapped in a roll, and drinking milk from their thermos bottles.

"Best fun we ever had!" cried Tom. "Let's camp out like this a lot of nights."

"Sure!" said Buddy. "It's all to the berries!"

They sat for a while after eating and talked, now and then looking off into the dark woods which seemed all the darker because of their little camp fire. Brick curled up and went to sleep after eating some scraps the boys tossed him. And soon the two lads rolled themselves up in their blankets and were ready to sleep.

But slumber did not come soon. It was strange for them to sleep out this way, and, though they were not far from the main camp, they felt just a little timid. There were queer noises, too, but Buddy said as long as Brick didn't wake up and growl or bark the noises couldn't mean anything.

"I guess Brick will growl if he hears any wild animals," Tom said.

"Or if he smells them," added Buddy. "We're all right. You aren't scared; are you?"

"Sure not! Are you?"

"Nope!"

"Neither am I. Good-night!"

"Good-night," echoed Buddy.

Then, rolling more snugly in their blankets, the little campers closed their eyes and were soon asleep.

It was Tom who awakened, after how long he did not know, but he felt that something was happening. His face was wet and there was a pattering sound on the leaves. Then, suddenly, Tom called:

"Buddy!"

"Yes! What is it?"

"It's raining! Raining hard! I'm soaked!"

"So it is!" cried Buddy as he felt the wet drops on his face. "And here's Brick trying to crawl under my blankets," he went on as he felt his dog snuggling close to him. "Gosh, what a shame! Rain!"

"What'll we do?" asked Tom, dismally.

The rain came down harder than ever. The boys hadn't counted on this.

CHAPTER XII

PIRATE ISLAND

DARK, dreary and dismal it was in the woods for the two small campers. The rain had put out their fire, which had made such a cheerful glow, and they knew it would be hard to kindle again in the dampness.

"Wow! This is fierce!" exclaimed Buddy.

"We should have brought our rubber coats," said Tom, shivering a little.

"And an umbrella," added his chum. "If we had a big umbrella it would be like a tent. Always after this when we sleep out, I'm going to bring an umbrella," Buddy decided.

"Sure, that'll be the best thing to do. But what about going back to our tent, now?"

Buddy did not answer at once. He was a brave little fellow and once he started anything, even if it was only raising a prize pump-

kin, he didn't like to give it up. Yet as the rain came down harder and wetter on him and Tom, Buddy began to think that, even if Boy Scouts would stay out of doors in all sorts of weather, perhaps it would be best, now, for him and Tom, who were not Boy Scouts, to go back to the main camp. Yet Buddy did not want to do this.

Back in their comfortable tent Mr. and Mrs. Gordon heard the rain pattering down.

"Oh, those poor boys!" murmured Mrs. Gordon.

"What's the matter with them?" asked her husband with half a laugh.

"Why, they'll get all wet."

"Well, they aren't either sugar or salt. Water won't hurt 'em! But I think this will give them enough of sleeping out. They'll be tramping back to their tent pretty soon."

"I hope so," said Tom's mother. "I wonder if I shouldn't get up and make them some hot chocolate?"

"They'll be all right," her husband said.

"It will do them good to rough it a bit. They're pretty big boys now and must learn to look after themselves. Buddy and Tom will be all right."

"I'm sure I hope so," Mrs. Gordon murmured, and then she listened for any sounds which might tell her that the two lads were coming back to finish the rainy night in a dry tent.

But Buddy and Tom didn't do this. After thinking about it for a little while Buddy suddenly got up, switched on his flashlight, by the gleam of which he could see Brick trying to crawl farther into his blanket, and then Buddy said:

"Let's go to that cave and sleep the rest of the night there."

"The cave you fell into?" asked Tom.

"Sure! We can go back in it and keep dry."

"Say, that'll be fine!" exclaimed Tom. "Then we won't have to give up and go back to our tent. But can you find the cave?"

"It isn't far from here," said Buddy. "That path goes right to it," and he pointed to a side trail which branched off the main one near a big, oak tree.

"Well, if you can find it I'll sleep in it with you," offered Tom. "Only if we both go down in how can we get out again unless some one stays outside and pulls us up?"

"That grape vine rope is still there," Buddy said. "We left it there after you pulled me out, and Brick. And if we tie one end of it to a tree outside the cave and leave the other end dangle down inside we can grab hold of it and pull ourselves out in the morning."

"That's right!" Tom exclaimed. "And we can pull Brick out same as I did before."

"Sure!" said Buddy. "Come on! I'm getting awful wet!"

"So am I—soaked!"

They draped their blankets over their heads as a sort of shelter from the falling drops and tramped on through the woods, with poor Brick, wet and miserable, following them.

Brick didn't say so, of course, but there is no doubt he didn't care for this sleeping out business. He would have been happier back in the dry tent.

Buddy knew where to find the cave. Flashing his little torch now and then so they wouldn't get off the trail he led the way and soon the hole was reached. The boys made the grape vine fast to a tree outside, dropped the free end into the cavern and lowered themselves in, making sure the vine rope was strong enough. Once in, they called Brick to follow and he scrambled down beside them.

"Say, this is a fine place!" exclaimed Tom as he looked around the cave when he and Buddy both switched on their lights.

"And so nice and dry!" Buddy exclaimed. "No rain can come in here! It's swell!"

"As good as a tent," agreed Tom.

The cave extended back under the hill for some distance, and the level floor was covered with dried leaves that had blown in. On these the boys lay down on top of their blanket,

pulling over them the second one, but turning it so as to get the dry side next to them.

Brick turned around half a dozen times, as most dogs do before they lie down, and this made a little hollow in the leaves where he soon curled up comfortably and went to sleep. And the boys were soon slumbering again, in spite of their queer bedroom.

Meanwhile Mrs. Gordon waited in vain for them to come back, but Mr. Gordon, murmuring that he was sure the boys were all right, went to sleep.

The morning sun was shining brightly down into the cave when Tom and Buddy awakened. At first they could not recall where they were. But they soon remembered and, after yawning and stretching, and saying what a fine sleep they had had, they pulled themselves out by the grape vine rope, Buddy going up first and hauling out Brick, who didn't seem to like this very much.

"If we had something to cook we could get breakfast," Buddy said, when they were

outside the cave. The rain had stopped but the woods were still wet.

"I guess maybe we better go back to our camp," proposed Tom.

"I guess so, too," agreed Buddy, so back they tramped through the woods, feeling rather proud over what they had done. Brick ran eagerly on ahead. He knew where breakfast awaited him.

"Well, you poor boys!" exclaimed Mrs. Gordon as they came marching toward the tents. "What a terrible time you must have had in the rain!"

"Oh, it wasn't bad," Tom answered

"I knew they wouldn't mind," Mr. Gordon chuckled. He was proud of the boys.

"We went in the cave," Buddy said, "and slept there after it began to rain."

"Good idea!" exclaimed Tom's father. "I must take a look at that cave some day soon."

"Let's go there after we eat breakfast!" proposed Buddy.

"I thought we were going to the island today," Tom said.

"Oh, that's right," his chum agreed, for the night before, while sitting about the camp fire, eating, they had planned to go off in Buddy's boat to a small island in the lake. "Yes, we'll do that," said the red-haired boy. "It'll be fun! But is my boat all right?" he suddenly asked, for he and Tom had come into camp through the woods and did not go down to the lake.

"Your boat is down at the dock," Mr. Gordon said. "Why, did you think it wasn't all right?"

"Oh, I thought maybe whoever owns that boat might have come in the night to take it away," Buddy replied. "For it really isn't my boat."

"You can keep it if no one comes for it," said Tom's father, "and no one seems to be coming. It's been here quite a while now and I haven't heard any one inquiring about a lost

boat. So you can use it today. What are you boys going to do?"

"Go over to Pirate Island," Tom said.

"Pirate Island!" exclaimed his father with a laugh. "Where's that? I've been camping at Rainbow Lake several summers and I never heard of Pirate Island. It's a new one for me."

"It's that island over there," and Tom pointed to one about a mile from camp—a little island covered with trees.

"Oh, that's Barn Door Island," said Mr. Gordon.

"Buddy named it Pirate Island," Tom said.

"Just for fun," admitted Buddy with a laugh. "Of course I know there aren't really pirates on it," he went on. "But maybe there were some once upon a time."

"Well, have your fun!" chuckled Tom's father. "Only don't let the pirates catch you," and he went off fishing with another man who had a camp nearby.

Tom and Buddy ate a big breakfast, telling

Mrs. Gordon, between bites, their adventures of the rainy night.

"I surely thought you would come back when it rained," she said.

"It didn't rain in the cave," spoke Buddy.

"It was nice and dry and warm," Tom went on. "And when dad has time, we'll explore that cave and maybe find something."

"Maybe we'll find something on Pirate Island," Buddy suggested.

After doing some chores about camp, Buddy and Tom, taking a lunch with them, got in Buddy's boat and started to row across the lake to the island which Buddy had given such a fancy name. It was a calm, beautiful day after the rain. Brick had dried himself out in the sun after his wetting and was now once more a happy dog as he went with the boys.

"Well, here we are!" exclaimed Buddy as the boat grated on the sandy, pebble shore. "We must pull her up and make her fast so she won't drift away."

"That's right," agreed Tom. "Wouldn't it

be funny, though," he went on, "if your boat should drift away and we'd be stuck on this island?"

"We'd be just like shipwrecked!" chuckled Buddy. "Maybe it would be fun."

"It would be sort of lonesome on this island, though," Tom said. "Nobody lives on it."

"Nobody?" asked Buddy as he and Tom pulled the boat up on shore.

"Nobody, my father said," answered Tom.

"Well, there's somebody!" Buddy suddenly exclaimed, catching hold of his chum's arm and pointing off through the trees. "There's a man!"

Both boys saw a roughly dressed man hurrying off through the clumps of trees and bushes.

CHAPTER XIII

SOME BAD LUCK

"DON'T let him see us!" whispered Buddy, pulling Tom down beside him and behind the boat that was now up on shore.

"Why not?" Tom asked, as he watched the man hurrying away. "Do you think he's a pirate?"

"Oh, no," Buddy answered. "I know there aren't any pirates around here, or on this island. I only called it that name for fun. But that man may want to take my boat."

"If it's his you'll have to give it to him," Tom said.

"Oh, sure, of course!" Buddy agreed. "But if he took it now we couldn't get back to our tent camp off this island and we haven't got enough grub to stay here very long. I only meant not to let him have the boat now, if it's

really his. He can take it after we get back to the main shore."

"Oh, I see!" exclaimed Tom. "Well, maybe we'd better run after him and tell him that."

"Yes," agreed Buddy. "I guess that would be a good thing to do. If it's his boat he ought to have it, and I wouldn't want to keep a boat that belonged to someone else. But maybe he'd let us play here a while, then row us home and take his boat."

"He seems in a hurry to get away," spoke Tom, for the man was now running.

"Let's holler at him," suggested Buddy, so they raised their voices in a shout. But the man paid no heed to them and kept on running. Leaving the boat, the boys followed. They hurried across the island which was long and narrow. But when they got in sight of the other shore they saw the man jump into a canoe that was pulled up on the beach and quickly paddle away.

"There he goes!" exclaimed Buddy. "And

I'm glad of it. I guess the boat I found can't belong to him or he wouldn't have a canoe."

"I guess so, too," assented Tom. "Anyhow he's gone. And say, Buddy, do you know what I think?"

"No! What?"

"I think he's an Indian. Not Black Horse," he went on, "but maybe another Indian from that same camp. I guess maybe he came on this island to hunt and when he found there aren't any wild animals here he went away."

"Aren't there any wild animals here?" asked Buddy as he watched the man quickly paddling away from the island, not turning his head to look back, when he might have seen the boys. "No animals? That's queer!"

"Oh, I guess there's squirrels and chipmunks," Tom said. "But I mean no big animals that an Indian would want to hunt."

"Maybe not," Buddy said. "But, anyhow, that man didn't have a gun or any bow or arrows."

"Then I guess he couldn't have come here to

hunt," spoke Tom. "Anyhow he's gone and we're here and we'll have some fun."

"That's what we will!" laughed Buddy. "Packs of fun! Hi, Brick!" He tossed a stick into the water and the dog rushed in to bring it back.

Going back to their boat, the boys got out the packages of lunch they had brought and then began tramping about the island. It wasn't very large, though it took them about an hour to walk all around the shore edge. During this trip they saw no other person, and only noticed a few birds, two squirrels and a chipmunk. Though once, as they were going through some thick bushes, they heard a loud rustling noise in the leaves.

"There's some big animal!" cried Buddy.

"Did you see him?" asked Tom, eagerly, and he got an arrow ready for his bow, as the boys had brought these weapons with them.

"No, I didn't see him, but I heard him. I guess maybe it was a fox."

"Jimmity! I'd like to shoot a fox!" Tom

exclaimed, pressing forward eagerly. "You can sell a fox skin for a lot of money!"

"Come on! Maybe we can get a shot!" Buddy cried and the boys and their dog, who was now excitedly barking, plunged through the underbrush.

They didn't seem to think that perhaps the fox might like to keep his skin and fur for himself. But, really, the animal, whatever it was, did not stay to be shot. And he never was in much danger. Off it raced through the bushes and the boys never had a glimpse of it. They didn't know whether or not it was a fox.

So, for lack of any game to shoot at, they set up a piece of bark against a stump for a target and winged their arrows at that. When they hit it, or came anywhere near it, they were quite delighted.

"After that Indian gives us some lessons we'll be pretty good," decided Buddy as he made a fair shot.

"I guess that Indian is never coming back

here to Rainbow Lake," Tom decided. "Anyhow we're having fun."

"That's right!" agreed Buddy.

They played a little longer on Pirate Island and let Brick run about, roving where he pleased. The dog seemed to be having a good time also. Then the boys began to feel hungry, so they built a little fire on the farther shore, where the unknown man had pulled up his canoe, and toasted sausages which, they both agreed, made the best meal they had ever eaten.

They rested in the shade after this lunch and explored the island a bit more later in the afternoon. Then, as the sun began to get low in the west, they went back to where they had left their boat. But Buddy had no sooner reached the place than he cried:

"Look!"

"What's the matter?" asked Tom hurrying toward him.

"The oars are gone!"

"The oars?"

"Yes, both oars are gone. Golly! How are we going to row back?"

"Maybe that man in the canoe paddled around here and took them," suggested Tom.

"What would he do that for?" Buddy wanted to know.

"So we couldn't row home," Tom said, solemnly. "Buddy, I guess he was an Indian and he took the oars so we couldn't get off the island—so we'd have to stay here. For we can't go off in your boat without any oars to row; can we?"

"Not very well," Buddy said. "But let's look around. Maybe he only hid the oars. Gosh! This sure is bad luck!"

CHAPTER XIV

TWO SAILOR BOYS

BUDDY and Tom ran up and down the lake shore, on both sides of the boat as it rested on the pebbly beach. They looked everywhere for the oars but could not find them. Brick also ran up and down with the boys, but Brick was more interested in queer smells, and with trying to catch the little fish that came close to shore in the shallow water, than he was in finding missing oars.

"They aren't here," said Buddy, after a while.

"I guess that Indian took them," spoke Tom.

"No," went on Buddy, shaking his head, "I don't see how he could. As soon as we landed here and began to pull the boat up, we saw that man running away. And then

we saw him go off in his canoe and the oars were here then. So I don't see how he could take them."

"He might have come paddling back, without us seeing him, when we were walking around the island," Tom suggested.

"Yes, that's so," Buddy admitted after thinking about it. "He might have done that. But, anyhow, the oars are gone."

"Maybe he chucked 'em into the lake and they floated away," suggested Tom.

"If he did that they wouldn't be very far off," Buddy answered, "and I don't see them."

"I don't, either," went on Tom. For no oars were in sight floating on the blue water of Rainbow Lake.

"And how are we ever going to get off this island in my boat, without oars, I don't see," went on the blue-eyed boy.

"Maybe we could get sticks and push ourselves over to the main shore," proposed Tom,

looking to where, in the distance, he could dimly see his father's camp.

"The lake is too deep for us to push ourselves very far out," Buddy answered. "We couldn't get sticks long enough to reach the bottom."

"That's so," Tom sighed. "Well, what are we going to do? We can't holler for help, it's too far for anybody to hear us. But maybe if we wait here long enough," he added, "somebody will come past in a boat and see us. And if it's a motor boat they'll tow us. That would be swell!"

"Great!" admitted Buddy. And then, as he went down to his boat again, to have another look for the oars, though he did not hope to see them, he gave a sudden shout.

"What is it?" cried Tom. "Is somebody coming?"

"No, but I've found a way so we can get off this island in our boat without oars."

"How, Buddy?"

"By sailing."

"Sailing? Why, there isn't any sail on your boat."

"I know there isn't, but I'll make one—out of this!"

Buddy held up a large umbrella which he had put in his boat a day or two before and had forgotten all about. He thought the umbrella might be useful if he and Tom were caught out in a rain storm while fishing.

"An umbrella for a sail!" cried Tom.

"Sure, it's just the berries! The wind is blowing the right way and all we'll have to do is for one of us to sit up in the front of the boat and hold the open umbrella. The wind will blow on it just like on a sail and we'll be two sailor boys sailing home," Buddy explained.

"Golly! That will be great—if it works," said Tom.

"Sure it'll work," said Buddy. "It will be better even than if we had found the oars. Come on, help push the boat into the lake."

The boys slid it down the beach into the

water and Buddy, calling to Brick to get in, hopped in himself, while Tom jumped in over the stern as he gave a final push which sent the craft well out from shore. Then Buddy opened the umbrella and, surely enough, the wind filled it and slowly the boat began to move away from the island.

"Hurray!" cried Tom in delight. "We're sailing!"

"I told you we would!" shouted Buddy. "We don't need any oars."

"Maybe we'll find 'em somewhere out in the lake," suggested Tom. "Where that Indian chucked 'em."

"He was mean, if he took 'em," Buddy said. "But he couldn't make us stay on Pirate Island that way. We fooled him; didn't we?"

"Sure!" echoed Tom.

For a while the small lads sailed on nicely with the umbrella catching the wind. But, after a while, Tom said:

"We don't seem to be getting over to the main shore very fast, Buddy."

"No, that's so," admitted the red-haired lad as he tilted the umbrella to one side and looked beneath it.

"We're going right away from it," went on Tom.

"Yes, we are," Buddy agreed.

"Maybe the wind's blowing the wrong way, Buddy."

"Well, it isn't exactly blowing toward the camp," Buddy admitted. "Oh, but I know what's the matter!" he suddenly cried.

"What?"

"We've got to steer this boat. All sailboats have to be steered with a rudder, even an umbrella sailboat."

"But we haven't got any rudder."

"We can go back to the island and get a piece of board, or a stick for a rudder," suggested Buddy. "That's what we'll do. I'll have to put down the umbrella sail, though, so we can go the other way."

This he did, and then, using their hands for paddles, though it was slow work, the boys

turned the boat back toward Pirate Island. However, they would not land where they had landed before.

"Do you think we'll ever get back there so we can make a rudder?" asked Tom, when it seemed that the island shore was still a long way off. Tom was getting tired paddling with his hands.

"Oh, yes," said Buddy, cheerfully. "We'll soon be there and it won't take long to sail home when we have a stick or a board for a rudder to steer with."

"I know how we could maybe get to the island quicker," Tom said.

"How?" asked Buddy.

"If your dog would swim and tow us with a rope tied around him," went on Tom. "He's a good, strong swimmer and we've got a rope already here, fast to the boat."

"Yes, Brick might swim and pull us," Buddy admitted. "But if I made him jump in the water he might just take a notion to come swimming back to the boat instead of

swimming to the island and he'd splash us all wet."

"Yes, I guess he would," Tom agreed. "Well, we'll get there after a while this way."

"Sure!" said Buddy and he began to whistle, in which Tom joined. And a little later, rather tired from their hand paddling, but still jolly and thinking what fun they were having, the boys landed the boat on the island again and Buddy soon found a piece of flat driftwood which, he said, would do nicely as a paddle.

"You steer, Tom," he told his chum, "and I'll hold the umbrella sail. Come on, now. All aboard!"

"All aboard!" echoed Tom and once more they pushed off, captain and crew with Brick as a passenger.

The wind was blowing harder now and it was all Buddy could do, at times to keep his grasp on the umbrella, which was a large one and held lots of wind. But he put the crook of the handle around his leg and clung with

both hands and so the boat slipped through the water quite as fast as the boys could have rowed it.

With Tom using the board at the stern for a rudder, the boat was now kept on a straight course for the mainland, and soon the two boy sailors saw their camp tents and knew they had made a safe voyage.

"Well, I was just getting worried about you boys," said Tom's mother as she hurried down to the dock with little Ned and watched them come in with their queer sail. "What happened? Where are your oars?"

"We lost them," Buddy said.

"Or else an Indian took them," added Tom. "So we had to sail back, and it's lucky Buddy had this umbrella in the boat; isn't it?"

"Yes," agreed Mrs. Gordon. "But it was careless of you to lose your oars. How did it happen?"

The boys told her about seeing the man paddling away but Mrs. Gordon shook her head when they suggested that he was an Indian

who took their oars so they couldn't get off the island.

"That's silly nonsense!" she exclaimed with a laugh. "He was probably some fisherman who had landed to eat his lunch. He wouldn't take your oars."

"Who did, then?" asked Tom.

"I think no one did. What I believe happened is that you did not pull the oars far enough out of the boat when you landed. You must have left them partly floating in the water, and when the wind blew it made waves that loosened the oars and they dropped from the boat into the lake and floated away. Perhaps they didn't float very far. They may have gone ashore under some bushes where you couldn't see them."

"Yes, that's so," admitted Buddy. "We didn't pull the boat up very far, and I don't remember taking out the oars."

"That's what you should always do when you land a boat," advised Mrs. Gordon. "Pull your boat well up on shore, or tie it fast, and

then take out the oars. It is well to hide them if you think anyone might take them. A boat without oars, if it isn't a sailing craft, is not of much use."

"Unless you have an umbrella," said Tom.

"Yes, unless you have an umbrella," admitted his mother with a smile. "Well, I'm glad my two little sailor boys arrived safely in port. And now, Tom, if you and Buddy will go get Ned, we'll soon be ready for dinner. I suppose you are hungry."

"Terrible!" said Buddy with a laugh, while Tom asked:

"Where's Ned? He started down here with you but I don't see him now."

"Oh, Ned ran over in the woods after he saw you come in," said his mother. "Over that way," and she pointed. "He has a little place he calls his camp, near the spring. Go get him, please."

Buddy and Tom, with Brick, walked off through the woods to find the little fellow. But they had not reached the spring before they

saw him coming toward them on the run. He seemed much excited.

"What is it, Ned?" asked his brother. "What's the matter?"

"A cat!" was the answer. "There's a great, big pussy cat over in the woods where I was going to play."

"A pussy cat?" exclaimed Buddy, in surprise.

"Yes, an' he's got tassles on his ears!" cried Ned, his own eyes big with wonder.

"Tassles!" cried Tom.

"And a funny 'ittle short tail!" went on Ned.

"Short tail—a bob-tail!" cried Buddy. "Say, Tom, this must be a wild bob-cat—a lynx! They've got tassles on their ears. Oh, Golly! Let's get our bows and arrows!"

"Show us where you saw the bob-tailed pussy, Ned!" exclaimed Tom.

"Come on, I'll show you!"

As Buddy and Tom hurried along with the little fellow, they stopped in their own tent

long enough to get their bows and some sharp pointed arrows. Then they ran along, Tom almost dragging Ned off his feet. Brick ran with the boys, but ahead of them.

Suddenly, as they neared the little glade where the spring was, the dog began to growl and show his teeth.

"He smells that bob-cat!" cried Buddy. "Come on, we'll get him!"

And just then a queer, shrill cry came from the woods at which sound Brick growled deeper and barked louder.

CHAPTER XV

THE CORN ROAST

"DID you hear that?" whispered Tom.

"Sure!" said Buddy. "Golly, it must be a big one!"

"Pussy cat cryin' for milk!" murmured little Ned.

"That isn't a pussy cat," Tom said, quickly. "And if you see him again keep away from him. He might scratch or bite you!"

"Yes?" asked Ned who was a fearless little fellow, always ready to make friends with a stray dog or cat.

"That's right!" said Buddy.

"Not pussy cat?" Ned wanted to know.

"Well, a lynx is a sort of cat," Buddy explained as he and Tom went forward, carefully now, hoping to get a shot at the beast with their arrows. "But he's a wild-cat—a bob-cat."

"He was big," stated Ned, "and he looked at me. He was up in a tree."

"It's a good thing he didn't jump down on you," remarked Tom.

"It sure is!" agreed Buddy.

The boys were now almost at the spring, which was a little way back in the woods from the tents. Suddenly Brick, who had been growling and barking by turns, made a dash forward.

"He sees him!" cried Tom.

"Get your arrows ready!" ordered Buddy. "Keep back out of the way, Ned, where you'll be safe!"

"I don't wants big pussy cat to scratch me," said the little fellow. "Or bite me," he added as he hid behind a tree.

Buddy and Tom, with Brick racing on ahead, dashed among the trees until they were within sight of the spring. Two or three times they had caught that queer, wailing cry, which, if heard at night when a person is alone in the woods, is enough to frighten him. But

now it was daylight, the boys had their arrows and their dog and they were not in the least afraid.

"There he is!" suddenly cried Buddy as he caught sight of what seemed, as Ned had called it, a "pussy cat," though a very large one. Unlike most cats, however, it had queer, fuzzy tassles on its ears and the tail was but a short, stumpy one.

"Shoot him!" yelled Tom.

With hands that trembled so much they could hardly fit the notched ends of their arrows to the bow strings, Buddy and his chum each shot an arrow. But I do not need to tell you that with trees in the way, and with the lynx scrambling to escape, they did not hit the animal or come anywhere near it.

With a final yowl, the bob-cat leaped from one tree branch to another, and while Brick raced along beneath, trying to leap up and get him, the beast disappeared in the darkness of the forest.

"Golly, he's gone!" said Buddy, much disappointed.

"And we didn't even scratch him with our arrows!" said Tom.

"A good thing for you boys that you didn't!" exclaimed a voice behind them, and, turning, they saw Mr. Gordon looking at them.

"Did you see him, Dad?" cried Tom.

"I just had a little look at him. But you'd better not try to shoot any bob-cats. Not that you'll get much chance," he went on, "for there aren't many up here and I never knew one to come so close to a camp before. He must have smelled our dinner cooking and wanted some."

"He cried like he was hungry, that pussy cat did," Ned remarked.

"You keep away from such pussy cats," his father warned him.

"Oh, my goodness!" exclaimed Mrs. Gordon who had followed her husband into the woods, he having run after the boys as soon as he heard what they were talking about and had

seen them dash into their tent to get the bows and arrows. "I hope we aren't going to be bothered with those terrible bob-cats!"

"They won't bother us much," said Mr. Gordon, with a laugh. "And they aren't so terrible if you let them alone. A lynx will always try to get away from persons or from dogs, unless he is cornered and thinks he is going to be caught. Then a lynx might fight, and scratch or bite you badly. So if you see another bob-cat just let him alone and he'll go away."

"Maybe he came to our spring to get a drink," suggested Ned.

"Perhaps," said Mr. Gordon. "Anyhow, he's gone now and I hardly believe he will come back, since he knows we have a dog."

"Brick will drive him away," Ned remarked as he patted Buddy's dog. "Brick's a good dog."

"He could chew up that bob-cat," declared Tom.

"Yes, and the bob-cat might chew up

Brick," said Mr. Gordon. "A lynx is a bad fighter if he's cornered. Let 'em alone."

"Maybe we could catch him in our box trap, Buddy," Tom suggested.

"What would we use for bait?" Buddy asked.

"You boys let that lynx alone!" ordered Mr. Gordon and he spoke in such a way that they knew he meant it. "He won't come back here again, I'm pretty sure. But if he does just let Brick chase him and the bob-cat will keep right on running away and high enough up in the trees so he and the dog can't fight."

"You hear what daddy says, Ned," spoke his mother. "And when you see any more of those big pussy cats come back here out of the woods."

"Couldn't I give 'em some milk, Mommie?"

"No, indeed!"

"Well—all right," agreed the little fellow. "But he looked like a nice, big pussy and he was hungry."

"He was hungry all right!" chuckled

Buddy. "Golly, I thought sure I'd hit him with my arrow."

"So did I," said Tom. "I guess we need to learn how to shoot a little straighter. I wish that Indian would come and show us."

"So do I," Buddy remarked.

There were many things to talk about at the table under the canvas shelter that evening, and when Mr. Gordon, who had been off fishing with some friends, heard about the missing oars he said the boys had been careless and let them drift away.

"I'll take you over to the island in the motor boat some day, soon," he promised, "and we'll look for the oars along shore under the bushes."

"Then Buddy can't row his boat any more until he gets new oars," said Tom.

"No. But it will be a lesson to you boys to be more careful after this," Mr. Gordon said.

"I'm going to be," Buddy promised. "But,

anyhow," he went on, "we can have fun in my boat with the umbrella sail; can't we, Tom?"

"Sure we can."

They called it Buddy's boat, now, for no one had yet come to claim it. But some one was coming soon, and it made quite an adventure for the red-haired boy.

The day after the chase of the bob-cat it rained and a rainy day in camp is always a sad one. There wasn't much fun to be had but Tom and Buddy put on their rubber coats and did some chores and cleaned up inside and outside their tent. For when the sun was shining they were so busy playing that their things got tossed about.

In the afternoon it cleared a little and they went fishing with Mr. Gordon, having very good luck. Buddy caught the largest fish which made him feel just a little proud.

The next day was bright and fair and the whole party went on a picnic with some friends, to a high hill, called Mount Hemlock, about two miles from camp. The boys and

everyone else had a fine time, and on the way back they passed a field of green corn.

"Oh, I wonder if we could get some ears to roast?" exclaimed Mrs. Gordon as she noticed the field. "I'd love to have a corn roast."

"It would be fine," agreed her husband. "I'll come over here tomorrow and see if the farmer will sell us some corn."

"And can we build a fire down on the lake shore and roast the ears?" asked Tom.

"That's what I was planning on," his mother answered.

"Oh, that'll be swell!" cried Tom. "A corn roast is lots of fun! Don't you like 'em, Buddy?"

"Sure! I had some when I was out to my grandfather's farm where I raised my prize pumpkin."

"Well, we won't try to roast any pumpkins," said Mrs. Gordon with a laugh, "but if we can get some corn to brown at an open fire I shall just love it!"

So the next night, when Mr. Gordon came

back with a basket of green ears from the farm, the campers gathered on the lake shore in front of the tents, a fire was made on a big, flat stone and, when this was hot and there were plenty of red embers, the ears were laid near them to roast to a golden brown.

"Golly, they smell good!" cried Tom, as the corn began to sizzle.

"They'll taste better," chuckled Buddy as Mrs. Gordon set out some dishes of butter and salt.

Soon the roasted corn was ready and, letting it cool a bit, they began to gnaw the brown kernals from the cob. It was a feast to delight anyone and the boys enjoyed it very much.

Buddy was reaching for his second ear when he suddenly held back his hand and looked off toward the woods.

"What's the matter?" asked Mrs. Gordon. "Too hot?"

"No'm," Buddy answered. "But I—I saw —something—over there," and he pointed to the dark trees.

"Do you mean that—bob-cat?" Tom whispered.

"No, it was a man walking along back of the bushes. He dodged back of a tree just as I looked at him," Buddy said.

"A man!" exclaimed Mr. Gordon. "Well, that's nothing. I guess it was some of the other campers who smelled our roast corn and wanted some."

"Maybe you'd better take a look," suggested his wife in a low voice.

"All right," agreed Tom's father. "And if I find him I'll invite him to come and help us eat this corn. There's more than we need." He got up from his place by the camp fire and started toward the dark woods, the boys watching him anxiously.

CHAPTER XVI

BUDDY IS GONE

SITTING at the flickering fire, which glowed in the darkness on the shore of Rainbow Lake, Buddy and the others listened for Mr. Gordon to return to the corn roast. They heard him tramping about in the underbrush along the path that led through the woods.

"Are you sure you saw a man, Buddy?" whispered Tom.

"Oh, sure," answered the blue-eyed boy. "He seemed to be sneaking around."

"Then it couldn't have been one of our neighboring campers coming to help us eat the roast corn," spoke Mrs. Gordon and she gently took Ned up, from where he had fallen asleep in her lap, and laid him on a blanket near the fire.

"He didn't seem to be coming to eat corn," said Buddy. "It was more as if he was looking to see what he could see."

"Like an Indian, maybe," suggested Tom.

"Yes, like an Indian," agreed Buddy.

The boys nibbled at their roast corn slowly now, waiting, every moment, to hear or see Mr. Gordon coming back. And pretty soon he did, to sit down by the fire and go on eating his half-finished ear of corn as if nothing had happened.

"Did you see anyone?" his wife asked.

"Yes," he answered, "I did. It was a man but he didn't seem to want to see me for he hurried off through the woods as I came along."

"What kind of a man was he?" asked Buddy.

"That I couldn't tell."

"Was he an Indian?" Tom wanted to know.

"I couldn't be sure," his father replied. "You know the Indians up around Rainbow Lake don't dress in blankets and feathers as

the wild Indians used to do. They wear coats and trousers, so unless you see one in the light, and notice his dark face, you wouldn't know an Indian from a white man. But whoever this was in the woods, he ran away."

"Well, if he's gone then it's all right," Mrs. Gordon said, as she put the corner of the blanket over Ned who was stirring uneasily in his sleep. "Only he would have been welcome to some roast corn," she added. "We have plenty."

"Buddy and I haven't had enough yet," Tom said, reaching for his third ear. "Have we, Bud?"

"I guess—I've—had—enough," was his chum's answer, slowly given.

"Yes, don't eat too much," warned Mr. Gordon. "Remember you are going to bed, soon, and you want pleasant dreams."

"Will corn give you bad dreams?" Buddy asked.

"It might if you ate too much. Well,

Mother," Mr. Gordon went on to his wife, "I think your corn roast was a great success!"

"It was swell!" declared Buddy.

"The best we ever had," Tom said.

That night, when Tom and Buddy were getting undressed in their tent, Tom saw his chum look at his flashlight carefully, and lay his bow and some arrows where they could be easily reached.

"What you doing?" Tom wanted to know.

"Oh, just getting ready in case he comes back."

"In case who comes back?"

"That man I saw sneaking around when we were roasting the corn."

"Oh, do you think he will?"

"He might," said Buddy, putting on his pajamas, and setting his shoes well under his cot where he wouldn't stumble over them if he got up in a hurry.

"Are you going to shoot him?" Tom asked. "Shall I get my arrows out and be ready?"

"Might as well," decided Buddy. "I'm not

exactly going to shoot him, if he comes around," he went on. "But if we let some arrows go over his head, through the trees, it may scare him and he'll run."

"That's so," agreed Tom. "I wonder why he's sneaking around here, anyhow?"

"If we could catch him we might get your father to make him tell," Buddy said. "But I guess he'll run when he hears us shooting arrows at him."

"I guess he will," agreed Tom. "But maybe he won't come."

And the man didn't. The night passed peacefully. Not even Brick made a disturbance, though he got up rather early and, going over to Buddy's cot, licked his little master's face to awaken him.

"Oh, Brick, cut it out!" murmured Buddy, sleepily and then he turned over for another nap while Brick, seeing that the sun was up, and knowing it was time for dogs to be out, scrambled from the tent and went down to the lake for his early morning dip.

A little later both boys awakened and after a swim, during which they dived off the boat dock several times, they came rushing to breakfast with fine appetites.

"What'll we do today?" asked Tom. "Go fishing?"

"Fishing is fun," Buddy said, "but we've had a lot of that. I was thinking maybe we could fix a regular sail on my boat, instead of the umbrella."

"That would be swell!" agreed Tom. "But how could we?"

"Well, we wouldn't need a very big sail. We could get a long stick for a mast and if we had an old sheet, or a piece of an old tent, that would make a sail."

"Oh, I know where there's part of an old tent!" cried Tom. "It was one we had last year. It's up in the shack. I'll get it." The shack was a log cabin where Mr. Gordon stored his tents and camp supplies during the winter.

"I'll get the mast," Buddy offered, and

soon the boys were busy trying to put a sail on the row boat for which they now had no oars. It was hard work, but, after a while, Buddy managed to get a sort of mast stick fastened upright in the bow of his boat. Tom had brought the canvas and tossed it into the craft and then Mr. Gordon had called his son away for a time to go on an errand.

Some camp supplies were needed and Mr. Gordon decided to go a distance down the lake, to a small town, and load up the motor boat. He would take his wife, Ned and the two boys with him, he said, for the boys could help carry the canned and other goods from the store to the boat.

"Come on, Buddy!" Tom called to his chum when he learned what his father had in mind. "You can work on that sail when we get back. Let's go for a ride in the motor boat."

Now Buddy loved a motor boat ride as well as any fellow. But he was the sort of a lad who, once he starts a thing, likes to finish it. And he did want to get a sail on his boat—or

the boat he had found drifting in Rainbow Lake. So when Tom called to him Buddy asked:

"Do you really need me to help you, Mr. Gordon? 'Cause if you do I'll come, of course. But if you don't——"

"No, Buddy, I don't 'specially need you," Tom's father answered. "I just thought perhaps you'd like to come. But I'll need Tom. Why, what are you going to do, Buddy?"

"I'd like to finish this sail."

"Oh, all right. Then you may stay here in camp and we'll go to the village," said Mrs. Gordon. "Only don't go away until we come back; will you?"

"No'm, I won't," promised Buddy. "I'll stay right here and work on my sail."

So the others went off in the motor boat to get the camp supplies, leaving the red-haired boy working away on his sailboat, with Brick sleeping in the shade on shore, now and then awakening to bite at troublesome flies.

But when, later, Mr. Gordon and the others

came back in the motor boat, having been away about an hour, Buddy was gone. The blue-eyed boy wasn't around camp, though Brick was still asleep on shore.

"Buddy! Buddy!" cried Tom. "Where are you?"

There was no answer.

"His boat is gone, too," said Mrs. Gordon in a low voice.

CHAPTER XVII

AN ANXIOUS SEARCH

LITTLE Ned Gordon came tramping up the shore from the lake after he had alighted from his father's motor boat.

"Where's Buddy?" asked Ned who had taken a great liking to the red-haired boy. "I want to give him a taste of my lollypop," for Mrs. Gordon had bought her "baby" some candy at the store where the camp supplies were purchased.

"Buddy is gone," said Tom.

"Gone?" exclaimed Mr. Gordon who had remained at the dock a few minutes to securely fasten the boat they had been riding in. "Where's he gone?"

"I don't know," Tom answered. "But he isn't here. And his boat isn't here, either."

"Yes, I noticed that the first thing," said

Mrs. Gordon. "But before we left I told Buddy not to go away and I hardly believe he would, after he promised he wouldn't."

"When Buddy promises a thing," said Tom, "he keeps his word. If he said he wouldn't go he wouldn't—but where is he?"

"Maybe up in the tent asleep," Mrs. Gordon said.

"Maybe he gone to look for funny pussy cat!" spoke Ned. "One up in the tree without any tail and with tassles on his ears."

At the first suggestion that Buddy might be in the tent Tom ran up to it, but he came back a moment later to report:

"He isn't there!"

"Then he must have gone off in his boat," said Mr. Gordon. "It wasn't the right thing for him to do, after he said he wouldn't, but if he got his sail fixed he probably couldn't help going out to try and see how it would work."

"That isn't like Buddy," said Mrs. Gordon. She looked out over Rainbow Lake. There

were no sailboats in sight, and only a few other motor and rowboats quite a distance out. She did not think any of these boats held the missing boy.

"I don't believe he could get his sail fixed so quick," was Tom's opinion. "He said it wouldn't be finished until tomorrow, even with me to help him, and he couldn't fix it all alone."

"Well, he's gone and his boat's gone," said Mr. Gordon. "So it looks very much as if Buddy had gone off in the boat, sail or no sail."

"Unless," Tom said, "maybe he got the sail half done and the boat all, of a sudden, went off by itself. Then maybe Buddy swam after it."

"He wouldn't do a thing like that. It would be too dangerous," said Mrs. Gordon. "Besides, if Buddy had his sail partly ready and hoisted it, and his boat did blow out from shore, he would be in it."

"Yes," agreed Tom. "But where is he?"

It was a puzzle for the blue-eyed boy did not

seem to be anywhere about the camp on Rainbow Lake. Tom and the others went from one tent to the other, looking in all sorts of places and calling Buddy's name.

But Buddy did not answer.

"Brick is here," went on Tom, as the dog leaped about him and Ned in a friendly fashion. "And Buddy wouldn't go anywhere without his dog."

"Unless he went off while Brick was asleep," said Mrs. Gordon. "And I noticed that Brick seemed very sleepy today. I suppose on account of the heat."

"It certainly is queer where that boy is," remarked Mr. Gordon.

He was beginning to get a little worried as the anxious search went on and Buddy wasn't found.

"It isn't like Buddy to play a trick on us," said Mrs. Gordon. "Or I might say he was hiding to tease us."

"Buddy would play tricks with me or any of the fellows," stated Tom, "but he wouldn't

play tricks on you and daddy. I guess something has happened to him."

"Buddy gone to get funny pussy?" asked Ned who, while he did not sense that anything much had happened, knew that Buddy should be in camp when he wasn't.

"No, he hasn't gone after the bob-cat," said Mrs. Gordon. "You don't imagine anything serious could have happened to him; do you?" she asked her husband in a low voice.

"Oh, no! Not at all! What I think is that Buddy has wandered off in the woods and maybe he has fallen asleep there and hasn't heard us calling him."

"But if he went off in the woods wouldn't he take Brick with him?" Tom inquired.

"Unless his dog was asleep or wasn't around here when Buddy went away," Mr. Gordon said.

"But it's so funny that his boat is gone," spoke his wife.

"Perhaps the man who owns it, and from whose camp it drifted away when Buddy

found it, came for his boat and took it," said Mr. Gordon, as this thought just came to him. "That's it, I'm sure."

"But if the man took his boat, which he had a right to do," said Mrs. Gordon. "Would he take Buddy away, too?"

"No, I hardly think he'd do that," her husband said.

"Then where is Buddy?" asked Tom.

It was quite a puzzle and as the anxious search went on, in and about camp, and no Buddy could be found, even Tom began to get worried.

"I've got to find Buddy," he said as he went to the tent he and his chum slept in.

"What are you going to do?" Tom's mother asked.

"I'm going to get my bow and some arrows and go look in the woods for Buddy," said Tom. "I've got to find him!"

"And I'll go scouting around in the motor boat," offered Mr. Gordon. "Certainly we must find Buddy."

CHAPTER XVIII

BUDDY'S QUEER RIDE

WHEN Buddy had worked for some time at making a sail for his boat that had no oars, the blue-eyed lad began to feel a bit tired. It was a warm, sunny day, and he was out at the end of the dock, in his boat, where there was no shade.

"I wish I could take my boat up on shore where Brick is, and work on it there," said Buddy as he looked toward where his dog was most comfortably stretched out beneath some trees. "But a boat is made for water and it doesn't belong on land. I guess I'll soon have this sail fixed, though, and when Tom comes back with his folks we'll have a ride."

Buddy had kept on fixing his mast and sail after Tom, with his father and mother and small brother had gone to the store.

However, even Buddy, smart little worker that he was, grew tired after a while. And it seemed to be getting hotter.

"I know what I'll do," said Buddy to himself. "I'll stretch out here in my boat and take a rest. Then I'll finish making the sail. But it would be cooler in the shade."

Then he began to wonder how he could make some sort of a shady shelter in his boat, for he liked being in it out on the water, even though it was tied to the dock. For the boat had a gentle, rocking motion on the waves of Rainbow Lake.

"I know!" exclaimed Buddy, "I'll make a little tent of my sail cloth and rest under that."

It did not take him long to pull part of the canvas to the stern of his boat, draping the folds over the pole he and Tom had cut for the mast. Thus Buddy had a little shelter on his boat—a sort of canopy under which he crawled and stretched out so the hot sun could not shine on him.

"Now I'm in a boat-tent," said Buddy to

himself. "I'll lie here until Tom comes back and then we'll finish the sail. It's nice under here. Nobody would know I'm in the boat, I guess," went on Buddy and he laughed to think that, stretched out as he was under the sail, no one could see him. "Not even Brick," thought the red-haired boy as he had a glimpse of his dog, going off in the woods to find a more cool and shady place where there were not so many flies to bite him.

It was cooler, now, with the sail for a shelter and with the gentle rocking of the boat, and the lapping of the waves against the dock, Buddy was so soothed that, before he knew it, he had fallen fast asleep.

And while he slept something strange happened. Down the lake came chugging a small motor boat. Steering it was a man with a very dark face, and bright, black eyes which roved to and fro along the lake shore. Suddenly the dark man in the motor boat gave a grunt of surprise and steered his craft over toward the dock where Buddy was asleep under the sail.

"Ha!" muttered the dark man. "There she is! I take her now!"

Silently his motor boat slid up alongside of Buddy's boat. It did not take the man long to loosen the rope, attach it to the stern of the power craft and start off up the lake, towing after him the unseen, sleeping boy under the shelter of canvas.

"Ha!" muttered the dark man again as he looked up toward the camp. "Nobody home!"

So Buddy was taken away, and, for a time, he knew nothing of it, nor did the man steering the motor boat seem to know that he was also towing behind him a sleeping boy. For Buddy was out of sight under the covering sail.

After a while, however, Buddy opened his eyes. He looked up and about him, and, for a few moments, he could not remember where he was. He saw the canvas over his head and thought he was in the tent with Tom, and that it was time to get up. So Buddy called:

"Tom! Tom! Wake up!"

Then Buddy began to turn over and move about and he soon found he was not in his camp tent, nor was he lying on his comfortable cot bed. He was stretched out on the bottom of his boat with the sail over him to keep off the sun.

"Gosh!" Buddy exclaimed. "I must have been asleep—and for a long time, too," he went on, as he felt a sort of lazy sensation and began to stretch as he did before arising in the morning.

Then, suddenly, Buddy noticed that the boat he was in was moving! He could tell it was cutting through the water at a fast clip, and it was bobbing up and down on the waves.

"Jimmity!" cried Buddy. "My boat must have come loose and I'm adrift—out on the lake! Jimmity!"

This thought startled him, but did not make him afraid, for he did not think he could have drifted far from camp.

However, Buddy sat up suddenly, pushing the sail covering away from over his head and

then he had a big surprise. For, looking forward, he saw that he and his boat were being towed away by that dark man in the motor craft, which was making fast time up the lake. Buddy saw that they were quite a distance out from shore and farther up Rainbow Lake than the blue-eyed boy had ever been before.

"Jimmity!" exclaimed Buddy again.

For a moment he imagined that perhaps he was dreaming, for queer things happen in dreams. But when he found he could move about, and could hear the swish of the water, and feel the warm sun, he knew it was no dream. It was real! His boat was real, so was the dark man and so was the motor craft that was so rapidly towing him away from camp. Then Buddy shouted:

"Hey!"

The man steering the motor boat paid no heed to this. Then Buddy yelled again, louder than before:

"Hey! Where you taking me?"

This time the dark man heard and turned

to look behind him. And he was just as surprised as Buddy had been at finding himself being taken away. But the dark man was surprised because he saw a boy in the boat which he had thought was empty.

"Where you taking me?" cried Buddy.

"Ha! Boy!" exclaimed the dark man. "How you get in boat?"

"It's my boat," said Buddy. "I was putting a sail on it and I went to sleep. When I woke up—why you had me."

"You boat—no—*my* boat!" and the dark man tapped himself on his chest. "My boat! Where you get boat?"

"I found it drifting down the lake a couple of weeks ago," Buddy said, making his way up to the bow so he could make himself heard better above the chug of the motor. "Who are you?"

"Me Indian," was the answer. "Name White Fox. This White Fox boat. No boy's."

"Well, maybe it is your boat," Buddy had to admit. "I only found it and I've been ready

to give it back to whoever owned it, only I thought nobody did, for no one came after it all this while. So it's your boat; is it?"

"White Fox boat," answered the Indian, and he smiled in what seemed to Buddy a friendly way. "Me look long time for boat, only just now see her down by camp. Nobody home, so I take my boat. I not know boy sleep in boat," and he laughed a little.

"No, I guess that's right," Buddy said. "You couldn't see me when I was under the sail. Well, if it's your boat you have a right to take it where ever you find it. But what are you going to do with me?" he asked and his heart sank a little for he knew he was now far from his camp and friends. "Where are you going?"

"Indian camp," was the answer. "Take boy there! You come up here mebby ride with me. Camp long way."

"Oh," murmured Buddy and his heart sank still lower. "You're going to take me to your camp! Oh, dear!"

CHAPTER XIX

THE INDIAN CAMP

WHITE FOX was not an old Indian and when he heard Buddy's rather sad voice he must have thought how he would feel if, when he was a little chap, he had been taken away by a stranger. So White Fox smiled kindly at the red-haired boy and said:

"No be 'fraid. I take care you, bring you back home, mebby."

"Oh, will you?" Buddy exclaimed. "That'll be fine! Though I don't exactly want to go back home to Mountchester. I want to go back to camp."

"Camp home—best home," said White Fox. "Good to live in woods."

"That's right," Buddy said. "But if you take me away up to your camp how will I ever get back to mine? It will be so late—at night."

White Fox suddenly shut off his motor and let his boat drift. Buddy's craft ranged up alongside and then, for the first time, the boy had a good look at the Indian.

"Why—why!" cried Buddy. "You—you're the man Tom and I saw running on Pirate Island and you got in a canoe and paddled away! Aren't you?"

"Pirate Island?" asked White Fox, wonderingly.

"Well, I call it Pirate Island though it really isn't," Buddy answered. "It's that island, over there," and he pointed to the one he and Tom had visited.

"Oh, yes, Indian White Fox have camp on that island," said the dark-faced captain of the motor boat.

"You have? A camp on that island?" exclaimed Buddy, no longer afraid or worried now. "Why, Tom and I didn't see it."

"Only little camp—not much big," White Fox said. "I go there for fish, sometime stay all night in camp on island."

"Did you see Tom and me that day we were there?" Buddy wanted to know. "What made you run away?"

"Oh, boys on island!" chuckled the Indian, as he remembered. "Sure, White Fox see! But no run'way from boys. White Fox run see big fish jump out in lake—want catch 'um."

"Oh, you ran and paddled off in your canoe so you could catch some big fish," repeated Buddy. "Was that it?"

"Sure! White Fox no run from boys!" and he chuckled a little.

"I didn't see why you would," Buddy said. "But it looked funny. So this is your boat?"

"Sure, my boat! Her drift down lake—White Fox look many places but no find she until now. Boy like boat?"

"Yes, I like this boat, I had begun to think it was mine," Buddy said with a little sigh. "Though if it's yours you have a right to take it. Is this your boat, too?" and he put his

hand on the rail of the motor craft alongside of which he now was drifting.

"This my father's boat—Black Horse."

"Black Horse! Why, I know him! Tom's father bought some bows and arrows for us off him. Black Horse was going to show us how to shoot."

"Black Horse my father. He come back yistday from city," explained White Fox. "Mebby so him come your camp and show you. Him home now—his camp—'way up lake."

"Yes, he said he had a camp there," went on Buddy. "But look here, White Fox, if you take me away up to your camp in the woods I won't get back to my camp for a long time—after dark—and Tom and his father and mother will be worried about me."

"You want go back your camp?" asked the Indian.

"Sure I do!" said Buddy. "I left my dog there."

"Your dog?" the Indian's face lighted up

with pleasure. He liked dogs as much as Buddy did.

"Sure, my dog Brick! Can't you tow me back to my camp and then take your boat. I'm glad you have it back."

"All right," White Fox murmured after thinking it over for a few moments during which time both boats drifted slowly along. "I take you back your camp. White Fox not know boy in his boat," and he laughed.

"No, I was pretty well covered up," chuckled Buddy.

Then the Indian looked into his rowboat and exclaimed:

"Where my oars?"

"Oh, those oars!" cried Buddy. "I'm awfully sorry, but Tom and I lost them the day we went to Pirate Island and pulled the boat up on shore. We had to use an umbrella for a sail to get back, and that's why I was making a regular sail for this boat," and he pointed to the mast and canvas.

"Oars lost?" asked White Fox.

"Yes," admitted Buddy. "I'm sorry. But Mr. Gordon thinks they're somewhere along the shore of the island where they drifted."

"Ha!" suddenly exclaimed White Fox. "If oars on island mebby so we find 'um. We go look, then White Fox take you back your camp. You come look for oars?" he asked.

"Sure I'll come," Buddy answered. "It was my fault that they got lost so it's only fair that I help find 'em. Come on, we'll go to Pirate Island."

"Um!" grunted the Indian. "All right! You come sit here," and he pointed to his motor craft. "Ride better."

"Sure, that'll be fine!" cried Buddy in delight. He was having a great adventure, he felt, not thinking how worried were the folks back in camp over his absence.

Towing the row boat, Buddy and White Fox turned the larger craft and went chugging across the lake to Pirate Island. It did not take them long to reach it and they landed in a place that Buddy and Tom had not seen on

their visit. It was in a little cove where there was a dock made of logs and to this White Fox made fast the two boats. Then he and Buddy went ashore, walking up a path to where the red-haired boy saw a small camp.

There was a sort of shack made from logs and brush, a fireplace of stones and old boxes for a table and seats.

"White Fox stay here when he come island to fish," explained the Indian. "You hungry now mebby me catch fish and cook. Hey?"

"No, thank you, I'm not so very hungry," Buddy said. "I'd rather help you look for the oars and then have you take me back to my camp. Tom and his folks will be looking for me. They must be back from the village by this time."

"All right! We go back after find oars," said the Indian.

Tom looked at the little camp. It was not meant for staying in very long at a time—perhaps only for a night or two. But in the shack

was a bunk, built up from the ground, and with green, spicy hemlock boughs for a bed.

"It's nice here," said Buddy.

"Good place for fish off there," murmured White Fox waving his brown hand toward the blue lake. "Come here many times in summer, but no like other men to come here."

"Oh, I won't tell anybody," Buddy hastened to say. "Tom and I will keep it a secret."

"Good!" grunted White Fox. "Boys come here, mebby some day, camp and eat fish."

"That'll be fine!" Buddy exclaimed. "Now I'll show you where Tom and I pulled up your boat and where we lost the oars. I hope we can find 'em."

"We look," said the Indian.

CHAPTER XX

CAMPING FUN

WHEN Tom and his father and mother, to say nothing of small Ned, had searched all about the camp for Buddy, and had not found him, nor had he answered their calls, they began to feel more and more worried. Tom had gone into the woods with his bow and arrows, but they had not helped to find Buddy. Then Mrs. Gordon suggested to her husband that before he went scouting around in the motor boat that he look up and down the shore.

"For I hardly think Buddy went away in his boat," said Mrs. Gordon.

"But the boat's gone and so is Buddy!" exclaimed Tom for perhaps the tenth time.

"I know, my dear. But that doesn't mean they went together."

"I think they did," Tom insisted. "And look at Brick! He knows Buddy went away in the boat. Look at him!"

The dog was standing on the dock, now and then sniffing the air to get a trace of his missing master. And then Brick would look off across the blue water and bark.

"He knows Buddy went out there in his boat," said Tom.

"But he wouldn't go and leave Brick," Mr. Gordon declared.

"Maybe Brick was off in the woods asleep," suggested Tom, and, without knowing it, he had hit in the answer to the puzzle.

"It isn't like Buddy to go away when he said he wouldn't," spoke Mrs. Gordon. "Especially alone in his boat."

"Maybe some other fellows came over to see him," said Tom, "and he went out to try his new sail with them." And then, suddenly, Tom had a new idea. "Oh, I think I know where he is!" he exclaimed.

"Where?" asked Mr. Gordon.

"Over on Pirate Island!" cried Tom. "Where we lost the oars. Maybe Buddy went there with some other fellows from around here to look for the oars. You said they might be there under the bushes, Dad."

"Yes, I know I did. Well, that's as good a place as any to look for Buddy, so I think I'll just take a run over there in our motor boat. Come along, Tom."

"I go, too!" exclaimed small Ned.

"No, you stay with me and take care of camp my dear," said his mother and though it took a little while to make the small chap satisfied with this, at last it was done and Tom and his father set off for Pirate Island.

"We'll go around it, first," Mr. Gordon said, and see if we can catch sight of Buddy or his boat. If we can't, then we'll land and look further."

Pirate Island was not very large and it would not take long for the Gordon motor boat to chug its way around it. But before half the

voyage was completed Tom suddenly stood up and gave a loud shout.

"What's the matter?" asked his father

"There he is! Buddy! I see him!"

"Where?"

"Over by that big tree!" Tom went on. "And there's a man with him! See!" He pointed and Mr. Gordon saw the two figures.

"Why, that's one of the Indians from the camp of Black Horse!" exclaimed Tom's father. "He's White Fox. I know him. We used to buy berries from him last season and fish, sometimes. Your mother bought some birch bark baskets of him. That's White Fox sure enough!"

"But what's he doing with Buddy?" Tom wanted to know.

"They seem to be looking for something," spoke Tom. "Hi, Buddy!" he called. "Here we are!"

Buddy and the Indian, who had been searching along shore for the missing oars, heard the shout and, at the same time, saw the Gordon

motor boat. Buddy gave a cry of delight on seeing his chum.

"What are you doing over here?" asked Tom. "Did you sail your boat over to this island?"

"We're looking for those oars," Buddy answered. "And I didn't sail my boat. White Fox towed me here. Oh, I had a great adventure!"

"Golly!" cried Tom. "That's wonderful!"

Just then the Indian gave a shout and, making a sort of dive into the bushes at the edge of the water brought out two oars which he held up.

"We've found 'em!" cried Buddy. "It's his boat," he went on, pointing to the Indian.

"Well, things are turning out all right!" chuckled Mr. Gordon.

"Let's get Buddy in here so he can tell us about it," suggested Tom, as he saw his chum and the Indian walking along the shore. White Fox was carrying the two oars.

"Land over there!" Buddy called to his

friends, pointing around the end of the island. "White Fox has a dock camp there."

"He has?" cried Tom in surprise.

"Yes, a camp where he stays when he comes here to fish. It's all right to tell them," Buddy said to the Indian. "They won't spoil your fishing."

"They all right," murmured White Fox. "Friends of you?" he asked.

"Sure, they're my friends," Buddy said.

In a little while Mr. Gordon steered his boat around to the little cove and soon Tom and his father were listening to Buddy's story of how he had gone to sleep in the boat and how White Fox had come down the lake and towed it away.

"But it's his," Buddy said, "so he has a right to take it."

"Surely," agreed Mr. Gordon.

"Boys come Indian camp, far up lake, have some fun," suggested White Fox, waving his hand toward the distant woods. "Mebby so

take boat if you want 'um so long you stay up here," and he looked at Buddy.

"Well, I was going to put a sail on and Tom and I were going to have a lot of fun, since we lost the oars," Buddy remarked. "But I guess we can't now, for you'll want your own boat. But it's all right. I only found it."

"We can put a sail on our rowboat," Tom suggested.

"Sure!" agreed Buddy. "And can we go up to the Indian camp some day?" he asked Mr. Gordon.

"I guess so," was the answer. "And maybe Black Horse will give you some lessons with the bows and arrows."

"White Fox show boys how shoot," said the other Indian.

"Hot dog!" cried Tom.

"All to the berries!" echoed Buddy.

"Well, let's get back to camp; Mother will be worried," suggested Mr. Gordon. So the mast and sail were taken from the Indian's boat and stowed in the Gordon motor craft and

then, lashing the recovered oars in safely, White Fox started to tow away his rowboat.

"Good-bye!" Buddy and Tom called to him as he went on up the lake. "See you in camp!"

"Goo'-bye!" echoed White Fox, smiling back at them.

Mrs. Gordon was very glad to see Buddy back in camp again, and Brick was so delighted that he jumped all over his young master. Then Buddy told all that had happened, how he had gone to sleep and how surprised he was at awakening to find himself being towed up the lake.

"Golly!" cried Tom as they gathered under the dining canopy. "I wish it had happened to me!"

"Oh, we've got time to have lots of things happen yet," said Buddy.

And in the days that followed he and Tom had plenty of camping fun. Mr. Gordon took them on an excursion up to the Indian encampment, whence the rowboat had drifted away and where the boys again met Black Horse and

White Fox. Buddy and his chum had several lessons in shooting arrows, learning how to do it quite well.

Later they made a small sail for the row boat and went cruising about shores of Rainbow Lake. Once they were "shipwrecked," when the mast broke as they were going to Pirate Island. But they had oars in the boat so they got safely back to camp.

Several times White Fox or some of the other Indians came down to sell things their squaws made or fruits and berries the Indians themselves gathered in the woods, and the boys became quite friendly with them.

But, after a while, the days and nights began to get cool, and it grew dark earlier and earlier. Summer was going. Soon school would open.

"But, no matter about school," Buddy said, "I've had a grand time in your camp, Tom. And we had some adventures in my boat, though I didn't own it very long," he added with a laugh.

"We sure did have fun!" Tom agreed. "I wonder what we'll do next?"

"I'd like to go away with you again," Buddy said.

"So would I," Tom remarked.

The boys had their wish, as you may learn by reading the next book in this series which will be called: "Buddy and His Chum; or A Boy's Queer Search." In that volume I shall have the pleasure of telling you about some strange adventures.

One day, just before they were to break camp to go back to Mountchester, Buddy and Tom, sitting on the dock, saw a motor boat coming toward them.

"It's White Fox," said Tom.

"Wonder what he's got to sell now?" spoke Buddy.

However the Indian had nothing to sell. Rather, he had something to give away. He had brought two miniature models of bark canoes, one for Tom and one for Buddy.

"Boy lose boat him find," grunted White

Fox, "so give him 'nother," and he handed Buddy his canoe, passing the second one to Tom.

"Oh, thanks!" the boys murmured, and Buddy added:

"Well, I've got a boat of my own anyhow, even if it isn't very big."

"They're swell!" exclaimed Tom. "Let's see how they look in the water."

And then the two chums tested their quaint little craft and thanked White Fox again, as the Indian turned his boat about and chugged back to his camp in the woods.

"Golly, it's nice here," murmured Tom as he looked at the trees all about Rainbow Lake.

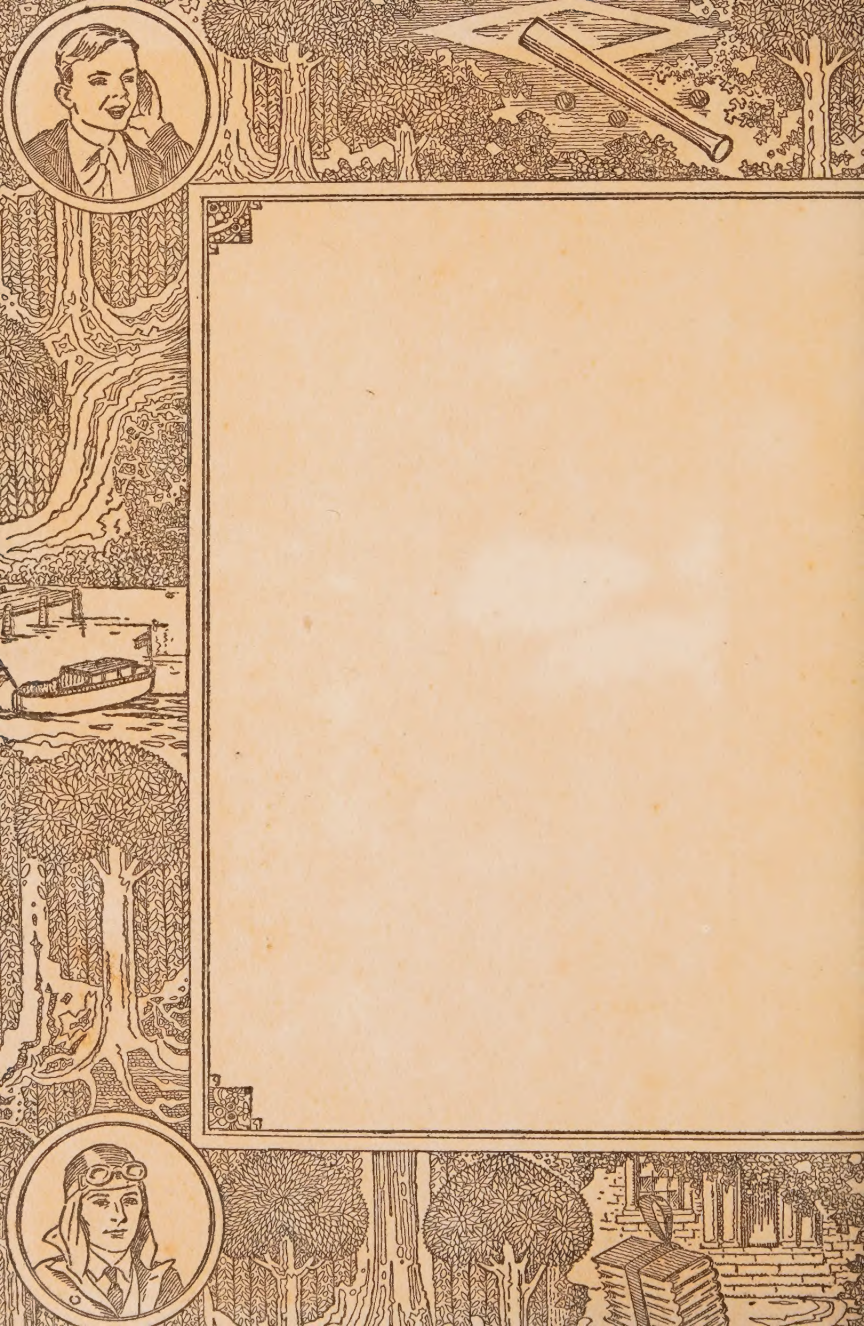
"Dandy!" agreed Buddy.

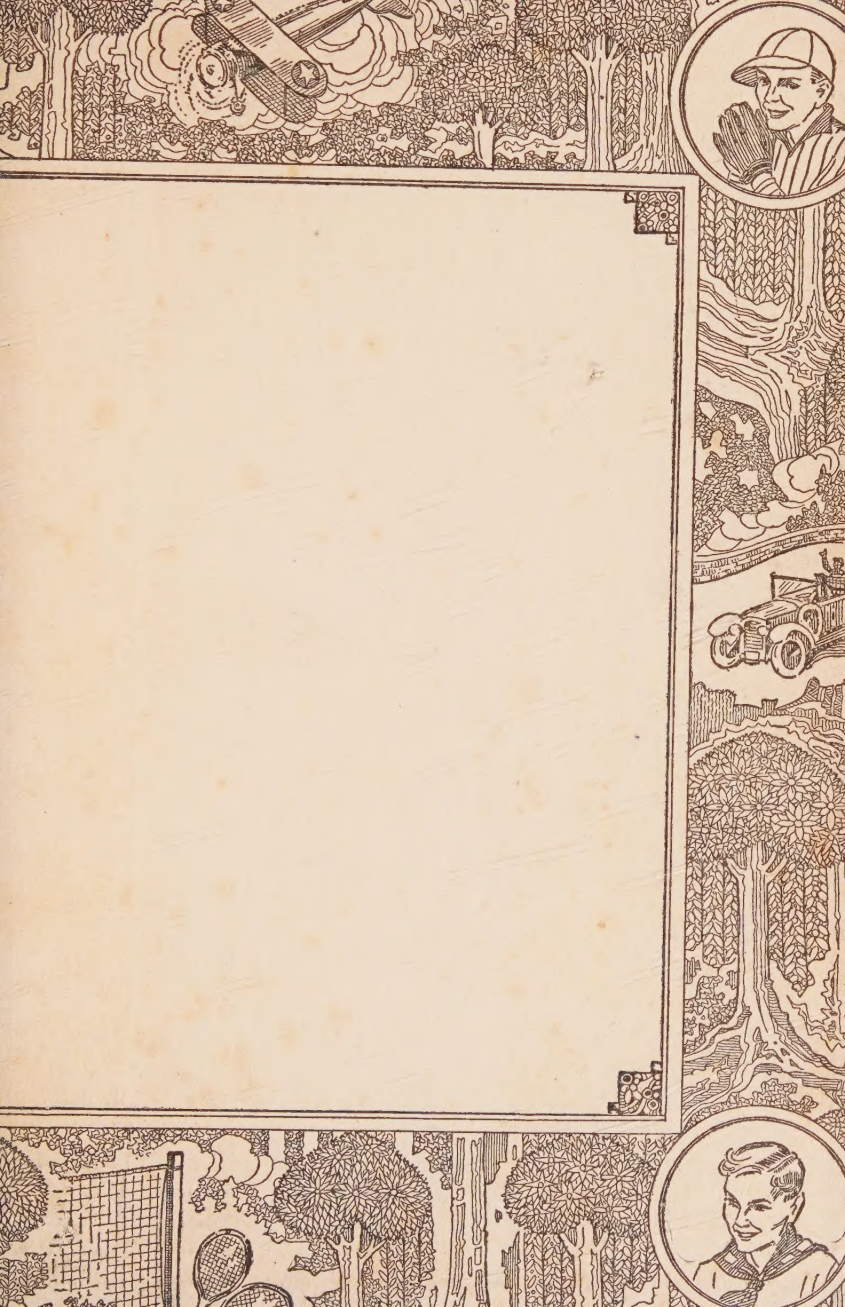
And then, from the tent, Mrs. Gordon called:

"Dinner! Dinner!"

The boys rushed up to eat and there, for a while, we shall leave them.

THE END





283-AAY-469